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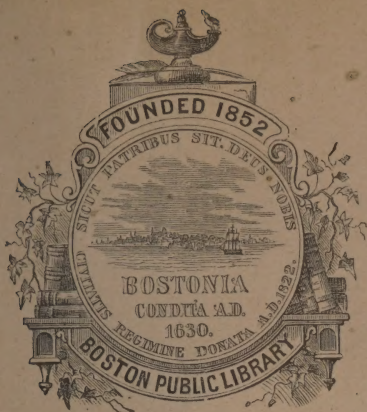












K. 1490

PAMPHLETS.

*West Indies.*









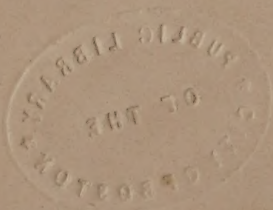
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MEMORANDA.





SOME CONSIDERATIONS  
ON THE  
PRESENT DISTRESSED STATE  
OF THE  
BRITISH WEST INDIA COLONIES,  
THEIR CLAIMS  
ON THE  
GOVERNMENT FOR RELIEF,  
AND THE ADVANTAGE TO THE NATION IN SUPPORTING THEM,  
PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE  
COMPETITION OF EAST INDIA SUGAR.

BY  
A WEST INDIAN.

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## SOME CONSIDERATIONS,

*&c. &c.*

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AFTER the discovery of America, in 1492, the commercial nations of Europe were anxious to benefit by the territories which they had acquired in the new world, and encouraged the settlement of colonies in it, with whom they might trade upon better terms than with independent and rival nations. The principal benefits contemplated were the mutual interchange of commodities, which different climates and circumstances produce, the consumption of the manufactures of the parent state, the extension of the navigation, and the consequent naval power of the nation. In this spirit, surrendering a part of the agriculture of the mother country, the cultivation of tobacco was prohibited in England and Ireland, where it used to be grown, by King James, in 1624, because it could be produced more abundantly, and of a better quality, in Virginia. In the case of the British Sugar Colonies, though no precise compact, or terms of agreement, upon which they were settled, can be shown, further than the Proclamations of the Sovereigns,



the letter of the Acts of the British Parliament, and the practice of the Government, which were dictated at the will, and altered at the pleasure of one party, without leaving to the other the power to approve or dissent; yet, it is reasonable to conclude, that the close connection, and relationship, as it were, of parent and children, between the mother country and the colonies, was unquestionably intended to be mutually advantageous. The welfare of the colonies was to be consulted, as well as the interests of the mother country. If the parent state act by any other rule, it will give birth to both tyranny and folly; tyranny, because she would then conduct herself unfairly towards the colonies; and folly, because, in a short time, they would be reduced to ruin, or the necessity of separation, and the benefits, derived from them to the parent state herself, destroyed.

Upon such principles British subjects were induced to emigrate to, and settle in the West India Colonies, and have expended for that purpose upwards of 100,000,000*l.* of capital. They carried with them all the rights of Englishmen \*, and gave

\* See the Proclamation of the thirteenth of Charles II., which begins thus: " We being fully satisfied that our island of Jamaica, being a pleasant and most fertile soil, and situated commodiously for trade and commerce, is likely, through God's blessing, to be a great benefit and advantage to this, and other our kingdoms and dominions, have thought fit, for encouraging our subjects, as well such as are already upon the said island, as all others that shall transport themselves

to the soil the advantage of being an integral part of the British empire. The entire possession of the markets of Great Britain, and her dependencies, for their staple commodity, sugar, after the quantity produced became equal to the supply, has been indispensable to their welfare, and was a willing boon on the part of the mother country. Foreign sugar has, therefore, since the time of Charles II. been subject to a duty equal to a prohibition, and if the mother country has now procured new colonies, conquered by her arms, and retained by her treaties, which, increasing the production of sugar to more than Great Britain and her dependencies can consume, or foreign markets afford a profitable vent for, to the ruin of the old colonies, she has done that which is not consistent with the justice of a parent, and therefore ought to consider herself bound to do all that is practicable, to replace them in the condition in which they were previous to the experiments,

thither, and reside and plant there, to declare and publish, that thirty acres of improveable land shall be granted and allowed to every such person, male or female." The Proclamation goes on to make void the grants, if the lands be not cultivated, and adds: "We do further publish and declare that all children of any of our natural born subjects of England, to be born in Jamaica, shall, from their respective births, be reputed to be, and shall be, free denizens of England, and shall have the same privileges, to all intents and purposes, as our free-born subjects of England."—See Edwards's History of the West Indies, Vol. I. p. 216.

which have brought them to the very precipice of destruction.

The situation of the old British colonies is now truly lamentable. In a Report of the Commons House of Parliament, in the year 1807, it is stated, upon the authority of unquestionable documents, (see Report on the Commercial State of the West Indies, ordered to be printed 24th July, 1807,) that the average expense attendant on the cultivation of sugar in Jamaica was then 20s. 10d., and in the other islands 19s. 6d. upon every cwt., after deducting the value of the rum. It is to be recollected that the slave trade then existed, in consequence of which labour was to be procured at half the price for which it is now to be gotten, and that the value of rum is now much less than it was then. These two circumstances counteract a diminution of the outward freight from Great Britain, and a reduction in price of some of the articles of supply, which are annually sent from this country, and occasion the cost of the manufacture of one cwt. of sugar, above the value of the rum, to be about the same now that it was at the time when the Committee of the House of Commons made its laborious Report. The mercantile charges of freight, insurance, &c., were then considered to be 16s. per cwt. They are now become, in consequence of peace and the low value of sugar, less, and may be taken at 8s. 6d., which, added to 20s. 10d. in Jamaica, makes 29s. 4d., and to the 19s. 6d. in the Windward Islands, gives



28s. before one farthing can go into the pockets either of the planter or his creditors. The average price of sugar for the week ending on the 22d of January, 1823, as published in the Gazette of the succeeding Saturday, was 31s. 5d., leaving the planters of Jamaica an income of 2s. 1d., and those of the Windward Islands of 3s. 1d. for every cwt. of sugar they send to the markets of Great Britain, and upon which they are to support themselves and families, and to pay the interest of the money they owe. They are, in fact, very nearly without income, or interest for their capital.

The causes of this rapidly spreading ruin are apparently the following. After the insurrection of the slaves, in the French colony of St. Domingo, sugar became scarce, and consequently dear all over Europe, and in Great Britain, as well as other countries. The West India planters were called upon by the British public to increase their cultivation \*, and the sentiments of the public seemed to meet with the countenance of Government †. The East India Company was urged to furnish sugar to Great Britain. (See Milburn's Oriental Commerce, Vol. II. page 267.) These things, as long as the price was sufficiently considerable, and the freight of the company's ships high, did no great harm, but they have occasioned

\* Vide Resolutions of the Grocers and Consumers of Sugar, in 1792.

† See an Anonymous Letter, which the Privy Council published in its First Report upon the Slave Trade.

an increased cultivation in the old colonies, and now an influx of sugar from the East. In five years, ending with 1785, the old colonies sent to Great Britain an average importation of 1,579,537 cwts. (See the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Distillation of Sugar, ordered to be printed 13th April, 1808, page 4.) But in the year ending the 5th of January, 1808, they sent to Great Britain 3,069,805 cwts., or nearly double what they did about twenty years before. This was owing to no extraordinary circumstances, for in the years preceding and subsequent, the produce was about the same. From 1792 to 1808, with the double view of making the price of sugar moderate to the people of England, and of benefiting the revenue, frequent attempts were made, by withholding a portion of the drawback, to compel foreigners to pay a part of our duty, as well as their own. These operated, of course, very powerfully to encourage the cultivation of sugar in Cuba and the Brazils, where they now make four times the quantity they then did, and led the people of the continent of Europe to look to those countries for their supply. The abolition of the slave trade, by making labour dear in our own colonies, while it continued cheap in foreign ones, rendered it absolutely impossible for us, afterwards, to compete any where with foreign colonies, where this traffic was not abolished, or with the sugars of the East Indies, where the price of labour is extremely low, and their land of very

extraordinary fertility. The produce of the old colonies, in 1807, was more than Great Britain and her dependencies could consume, yet the Government caused the cession of Trinidad, Demerara, Berbice, Tobago, and St. Lucea, which now make, in addition to the produce of the old colonies, 893,876 cwts., or very nearly 70,000 hhds. of sugar. (See the Paper No. 218, ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, 18th April, 1822.)

This additional quantity we know not what to do with, and is just now the principal cause of the depressed value of sugar in Great Britain, because it makes the price here dependant upon the price of the Continent, and even worse than it, by the cost of transportation from hence, while the Continent is more cheaply supplied with foreign sugar than we can afford to sell ours for. Another evil, very important now, but more so in prospect, is the admission of the sugar of the East Indies into the home consumption of this country, under an insufficient protecting duty. The sugar of Bengal is less sweet than the sugar of the West Indies. It is not used in the refineries, but the sorts of it, that have undergone a process similar in effect to clay-ing, are in consequence whiter than West India sugar which has not been clayed. This description of it is employed by the grocers to adulterate West India sugar. To deceive the buyers, who would not otherwise purchase it, with the exception of a few persons of peculiar feelings, the mixture, which is cheaper than West India sugar of the same com-

plexion could be sold for, is vended as genuine West India sugar ; and, so far as the East India sugar is concerned, is a fraud upon the public. The quantity of East India sugar which now comes in the way mentioned into consumption in Great Britain, is 90,000 cwts. or about 7,000 hhds. annually, (see Paper, No. 533, ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, 17th May, 1821,) to the displacement of so much from the West Indies. Previous to the restriction of the intercourse with the United States of America, that country was the great market for our rum. As much of it only came to Great Britain as was required for the consumption of the Mother Country ; but since the interruption of the intercourse, the Americans have gradually got out of the habit of drinking rum. The lower classes of them now consume their own whiskey, distilled from grain ; and the gentry use the brandies of France, and other countries of Europe. In a letter of the 30th of April last, from Mr. Robert Lenox, of New York, a man of great information and of the highest respectability, he says, “ The consumption of Jamaica rum amongst us has decreased in a most astonishing degree, and the importation from Great Britain and the West Indies, is five times as much as we want. There are at this moment 500 puncheons afloat in this harbour, which will not sell for more than the duty and other charges.” This change in the habits of the people of the United States has been occasioned by the experiment of making Bermudas and Halifax



Entripots of the commerce of the British West Indies with the United States, perhaps with some small advantage to those places, but to the great detriment of the West Indies.

The present losses under which the cultivation of the West Indies is carried on, cannot long be maintained : they must speedily reduce both planters and merchants to inevitable and irretrievable ruin. The law passed in the last session of Parliament, to permit an intercourse with the United States of America, and other countries upon that Continent; seems likely to effect little at present, further than the supplying of our colonies with lumber and provisions, and taking a small quantity of sugar and rum in exchange for them. This however will do some good, and in time we may hope, the taste for rum in the United States will in some degree revive. The other act, to allow the produce of the West Indies to be shipped directly to Europe in British vessels, was passed more in conformity with the principles of the Board of Trade, than with the view of benefiting the West Indies, who have as yet received no advantage from it, and are not likely to derive any, unless refineries should be established in the West Indies, a branch of business not in the power of the planters to adopt, from the want of knowledge, of capital, and the time, which it consumes. But these measures, one of which indeed holds out some little immediate relief, and the other, something in process of time only, are yet totally insufficient to arrest the impending mischief. This can

only be done by more active and certain remedies, viz. : 1st. By a higher duty on East India sugar, so as to keep it out of the home consumption until the sugar of the West Indies be at a remunerating price, which cannot be estimated at less, in time of peace, than 45s. per cwt., exclusive of duty. 2dly. By diminishing the duty as the average price of sugar diminishes, exacting only what the planter can afford to pay. The operation of such a measure would be to encrease the home consumption when sugar is cheap, and to make the Government, as it ought in fairness to be, a partner in the prosperity or adversity of the planter. 3dly. By diminishing the duty in Ireland, where the population is numerous but poor, and therefore cannot afford to consume much sugar at the present high duties. 4thly. By granting, when sugar be too low, an increase of bounty in proportion to the diminution of the average price. This, if the bounty be sufficient and persevered in for a few years, would enable the British grower of sugar to undersell the planters of Cuba and the Brazils in the markets of Europe, and therefore compel them instead of ourselves, to reduce their cultivation. Besides rescuing our own Colonists from ruin, it would do more towards the effectual abolition of the Foreign Slave Trade, than any other measure which perhaps it is within our power to employ. These means of relief are the leading ones that appear now to be practicable to avert the destruction of the British West Indies, whose cultivation of sugar

must otherwise be reduced to the quantity requisite for the home market, and if East India sugar be allowed to occupy it, the cessation of the cultivation of sugar altogether in them must follow.

As attempts are now making, and hopes have long been entertained by the private traders to the East Indies, to supplant the West Indies in furnishing sugar for the consumption of Great Britain, and very erroneous statements in their support have lately been advanced in so important a place as the House of Commons, it is material that a right notion should be entertained of the advantages derived to Great Britain from the Colonies in the West Indies. It has been there said, that the difference between the price at which East India sugar can be imported, and West India sugar sold for, is so much taken out of the pockets of the people of England to be put into the pockets of the planters of the West Indies. Let us join issue upon the assertion. It is not intended however, as our adversaries do, to form an account with only one side, but to produce both sides, and to strike the balance of profit or loss to the Mother Country. East India sugar it is known can be imported, the inferior sorts at 20s. per cwt., and the best at 40s. Let us therefore take the mean for the average, and calculate that East India sugar can be supplied to the people of Great Britain at 1*l.* 10s. per cwt. East India sugar however is less sweet than West India sugar, in the proportion, it is understood, of two to three. The people of England for the same quan-

tity of saccharine matter which 1 cwt. of West India sugar contains, would have to purchase  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cwt. of East India sugar, costing them 2*l.* 5*s.*; and therefore they would still pay the very same amount for their year's consumption as for West India sugar at such a price as would give the planter a remunerating profit. We will however, for the sake of argument, suppose the sugars to be the same in quality; we will also suppose the advantages to the shipping, merchants, dock-owners, &c. would be perfectly equal, and that the effect would be merely to displace those who now have the trade for the purpose of giving it to those who do not possess it, in short, that nothing more is wanted on the part of the East India traders than, very naturally, to do good to themselves, and in operation, the very same thing as the turning of the gentry of the country out of their property would be, that it might be enjoyed by those who have now no property; by which trifling changes, in both cases, their respective advocates assert, the country would be a prodigious gainer. The quantity of British plantation sugar annually imported, (see returns to the House of Commons, in 1821 and 1822,) is about 3,700,000 cwts. The part of it which enters into the home consumption, from the same documents, may be computed at about 2,500,000 cwts.; the remaining 1,200,000 cwts. being exported as raw and refined. This 2,500,000 cwts., if the planters were getting a remunerating price, ought to be sold at an average of 45*s.* The excess of this above 30*s.*, at which East India sugar may be imported, would be 15*s.*



per cwt., equal to a sum of 1,875,000*l.* according to the notions of the honourable member, and asserted, as we understand him, to be taken out of the pockets of the people of England to be put into those of the planters. It is however to be observed, that the average price of West India sugar is at this moment a mere trifle more than 30*s.* per cwt. But we are willing to take the debtor side of the account at a remunerating value of sugar. Now let us ascertain what the West Indians are creditors by. About 290,000 casks of sugar are annually imported from the West Indies. Most of the proprietors are resident among us and spend their incomes here, as much to the advantage of the farmers, manufacturers, and shopkeepers of Great Britain and Ireland, as those whose incomes are derived from lands or funds in this country. The proprietors of sugar estates in Jamaica, and probably in some of the other islands, have most of them considerable penns, or grass farms, which raise cattle for the sugar estates, and are dependant for their prosperity upon them.

There are other proprietors of penns, who have no sugar estates of their own, and many of them are resident in Great Britain. The incomes of these must be added to those of the owners of estates, and could not form, if sugar were at a remunerating price, a less aggregate of profit and expenditure than 3,000,000*l.* sterling a year. This large sum goes out of the pockets of the planter, into the purses of the people of England. When sugar is

selling for less than 45s. the income and expenditure of the planter is diminished in proportion to the difference of price, so is also what is said to be taken out of the pockets of the people of England, which at this moment the average price of West India sugar being very little higher than would be paid for East India sugar, we may call nothing. To this sum on the credit side of the account, must be added the amount of the exports of British manufactures to the West Indies. They are stated by Lord Liverpool, in his speech on Lord Lansdown's motion for a committee on the foreign trade of the country, on the average of six years from 1814 to 1819 inclusive, to have been 5,434,716*l*. The present limited means of the planter and his dependants, it is probable, will not allow of the same exportation for their use, but only a small part of it can be dispensed with. However, as we cannot say what the defalcation, on an average of years, will be, it will be safest to take it at what his Lordship has made it. Add it to the 3,000,000*l*. of expenditure of the West Indians, at home, and you have no less a sum than nearly eight millions and a half annually put into the pockets of the people of England by the West Indians in return, if the statement be still insisted upon, for their paying a liberal price for West India sugar. Deduct 1,875,000*l*. from this sum, as the honourable Member would probably wish to be done, and the balance in favour of the people of England, by their connection with the British West Indies will be

found to be no less than 6,500,000*l.* sterling a year, an amount, which leaves no rational hope that Great Britain can ever discover the means of supplying herself with sugar upon more advantageous terms. But in truth, the whole eight millions and a half is profit, for considering the difference of quality, the people of this country would still have to pay as much for their sugar, if the supply were to change hands, because they must use more of it.

But the planters of the West Indies, as we have shewn, have a right to be considered as Englishmen, and though their property is situated at a distance of 4000 miles, they are nevertheless entitled to the same protection in their persons and fortunes, as our brethren in Great Britain and Ireland. They have been encouraged by the proclamations of the Sovereigns, and the acts of the Parliament of England, to possess their estates. From the time they have owned them, they have paid quit-rents to the Crown of Great Britain for their lands, and still continue to do so. They have expended their fortunes upon them. And is it now stated as a just principle of government, that they should be sacrificed, by the creation of a disadvantageous competition, to the conquered people of Hindoostan, who exclusively own the soil of India, who differ from us in colour, and are Gentoos in religion; entitled, as a conquered nation, to no benefits from his Majesty, but such as flow spontaneously from his will? And we humbly hope that none will ever be granted to them by the King, or the Par-

liament, to the injury of other subjects, not conquered in war, but Englishmen, enticed by his ancestors upon the throne, as their proclamations witness, to emigrate, for the advantage of Great Britain, and possess what they hold in the West Indies.

In another most important place, a nobleman of great talents and amiable character, is supposed to have stated, in support of one of the petitions of our adversaries, that there was no limit to the exportation of British manufactures, if we could take in return the productions of other countries, implying that we ought to admit sugar from the East Indies, to encourage the exportation of our manufactures to that country. The general proposition therefore turns upon the capacity of our own country for the consumption of foreign productions, and the particular one, upon its consumption of sugar. We can never expect to supply other nations from foreign countries. With a very few exceptions they will supply themselves. To enable us therefore to export British manufactures to other countries to a considerably increased extent, our consumption of their productions must be correspondingly increased. But in truth, there must, in every country, be limits to consumption. The wants of man for food are limited by nature. The other principle, which will govern importation, is the ability of payment, which must be considered at home, as well as abroad. When we look at the situation of the landholder, impoverished by over-



production ; when we look at the condition of the merchant, ruined by over-importation ; when we reflect that annuitants, and other persons of fixed income, cannot increase their expences ; when we view the situation of the shopkeeper, dependant for his business upon the other three classes of society, and consider that the labourer, whether agricultural, or manufacturing, must be satisfied with his loaf, his cheese, and occasionally his bit of meat, we cannot reasonably expect a greater consumption of foreign productions than now takes place. This consideration, in his Lordship's own view of the question, furnishes to us a belief, that the exportation of British manufactures cannot be increased, except to those countries which give us bullion, or money, in return for them. As to the power of consuming sugar, we have shewn that our own colonies in the West Indies, to which Great Britain is bound by the ties of prior engagement, and of parentage, as well as her own interest, long tried and ascertained, furnish us now with more sugar by a hundred thousand hogsheads annually, than can be consumed here. They also receive our manufactures to a very large extent, are in greater distress than our merchants, and even our agriculturalists at home, and like them are entitled to, and require the protection of the Government and Parliament.

If, as is proposed to be done, the sugar trade were transferred from the West Indies to the East Indies, the inhabitants of the latter country, who cultivate

the sugar of it, would spend no part of their profits in Great Britain. The whole would unquestionably be employed in providing the low luxuries of the ryots, or labourers, of Hindoostan, and therefore the people of those kingdoms would be deprived of a most important sum, which would otherwise annually go into their pockets. Nor would it, to any extent, encrease the export of our manufactures to India. The sugar trade of Bengal bears a very small proportion to the commerce of the East with this country. The total imports into Great Britain are 12,000,000 annually. (see appendix to the Report of the committee of the Lords on Foreign Trade, page 463, printed in 1821.) The quantity of East India sugar consumed in this country is not above 90,000 cwts. which at 2*l.* 2*s.* per cwt. the estimated value according to the above quoted document, is not more than 190,000*l.* or about one part in 61 of the total imports from the East. The export of British manufactures to all parts of Asia, according to the high authority already mentioned, Lord Liverpool's speech is 3,031,371*l.* Of this about a million goes to China, through the East India Company. (See Mr. Charles Grant's Evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on Foreign Trade, page 312.) Of the remaining two millions a large part is consumed in Arabia, Persia, and the Eastern Archipelago. It is therefore probable, that the consumption of British manufactures in Hindoostan, is not above a million and a half annually. They are principally

used by the Europeans resident in that country, whose numbers will not be much augmented, whether India supply Great Britain with sugar or not. The manufactures of this country are not likely to be more consumed there on account of their sugar trade with Great Britain, and what is used by the natives must be to the displacement of their own goods \*, and with the moral certainty of exciting dissatisfaction in India. Sugar is not the staple of the East Indies, but it is of the West Indies. The East Indies may flourish as they have done, without sending this article to Europe, but if the West Indies be deprived of their sugar trade, they will be ruined. They have nothing else to look to.

The ground on which it is understood, that the private traders to the East Indies assert the propriety of their being allowed to continue the sugar trade, for the supply of Great Britain, appears to us to be a peculiarly selfish one. They seem to wish that a trade with extraordinary advantages should be created for them, to the injury of others, as if they were the only British traders, who were entitled to favour. They want a trade made for them, which will give them a full cargo out to India, and a full cargo home. What is the case with other branches of our commerce? In the trade with Canada, and the other North American colo-

\* See Mr. M'Intyre's Evidence, page 297, of the Third Report to the House of Commons on Foreign Trade.

nies, the largest branch, as to shipping, which we have, the vessels go out from this country, with a very few exceptions in ballast. The outward freight, on the average, does not amount to above 10*l.* per vessel. In the West India trade, the next largest, the ships do not average an outward freight of above 350*l.* In the Baltic trade, another very considerable branch of our commerce, the outward freight is almost nothing, as in the Canada trade. These statements are given on the authority of a respectable ship broker. In every one of them the vessels go out in ballast, or nearly so, and depend upon the homeward freight for the profit of the voyage. Why then is the India trader to expect to be full both out and home? The dead weight, as it is called, which he requires at the bottom of his vessel, may consist, as in other trades it does, of ballast. Let him fill his ships out with British manufactures to the utmost of their capacity for carrying, but he has no right to bring home an article for consumption in Great Britain, to the great injury of another part of the British empire, for the sake of putting a trifle of freight into his own pocket. The average quantity of tonnage of the season 1819-20 and 1820-21, licensed by the East India company was 41,197 tons. (See the same 3rd Report on Foreign Commerce, page 372.) This seems to be the level, to which the trade to India in private ships, has settled, the tonnage of preceding years having been much greater. The sugar of the East con-



sumed in Great Britain, is about 90,000 cwts. as has been said. British merchant ships will generally carry in weight double their measured tonnage. The quantity of sugar therefore for use in Great Britain, may be estimated at little more than one-twentieth of the capacity of the vessels for carrying weight. Where, therefore, would be the injustice of making him take one-twentieth of his homeward weight in ballast, when vessels in other trades are obliged to perform one of their voyages, out or home, nearly in ballast, or entirely so? Let us see what the freight of the 90,000 cwts. consumed in Great Britain, amounts to. The freight of dead weight, viz. salt petre and sugar from India, was last year 3s. per cwt. It will be therefore only 13,500*l*. For this paltry sum, put into the pockets of the private traders to the East, is the cultivation of the West Indies, to the same extent of sugar, with its consequent advantages, to be sacrificed, and the owners of ships to the West Indies deprived of 5s. per cwt. which is what they receive, amounting to nearly double the freight of sugar for home consumption, paid to the East India ship owner?

At the time the protecting duty on East India sugar was established, it was represented to the West India body, and to government, that the rate of freight from that country in the ships of the private traders, would be at least 18s. per cwt. in time of war, and 12s. in time of peace. The protecting duty was established upon this cal-

culution, but it turns out to be quite a fallacious one, for the freight of sugar from India is now only 3s. per cwt. being 9s. short of the protection contemplated by the government, the parliament, and the West India body. This error surely calls for remedy? If it is intended, that the West shall be sacrificed to the East, let the protecting duty be taken off altogether, but if the sugar of the West Indies ought, in consequence of the engagements of this country with them, and its own interests, to be protected in the home market, it should be an efficient, and not a nominal protection.

It is worthy of the government of a great nation to consider some other points, as well as those of mere mercantile profit and loss, when it estimates the value of her dependencies. It is indubitable, that the insular British colonies in the West Indies, promise to be a durable appendage to the crown of Great Britain. They are too small, and too much separated to pretend to independence, and if ever severed, it must be by a foreign naval power, superior to our own. Our navy, all powerful as it is, at present, upon the ocean, can give no protection against a continental invader of India, and can afford no aid to our people against a revolt of the natives. It is scarcely possible to conceive that the duration of the British empire in that part of the world can be lasting. We are obliged to confide the tranquillity of India to the hands of the Hindoos themselves.

We have put arms into them, which they may employ, either for us, or against us, as they please. It is not in the nature of things, that irritating circumstances will not occur to kindle their resentment, and give pretexts to the ambitious for grasping the power which they may believe is within their reach. But besides this apprehension, there is another very strong motive for fear. When we contemplate the power of the vast empire of Russia, with its million of excellent soldiers, and its ambitious monarch, who may be looking upon India now as his future prey, and consider the geographical situation of those countries, and our own, we must consider that it is as natural India should become dependant upon Russia, at no very distant day perhaps, as Scotland and Ireland, from their geographical positions, have become parts of the English nation. If, therefore, Great Britain should unadvisedly ruin her West India colonies, for the sake of her possessions in the East, she is very likely some day to find herself without either.

There is also another most grave and important consideration, which every man must desire should be contemplated, with the seriousness its importance deserves. We have been subjected, in the early parts of our history, to foreign rule. The Anglo-Saxons, Danes, and Normans have been our masters, and if we do not maintain a powerful navy, we may again become subject to the military nations upon the continent. There is no trade we

possess, which contributes more to support the strength of our navy, than the West India trade. Our navy can protect them and us, and they contribute most largely in making it capable of doing so. Its extent is matter of public notoriety, but it is not so well known, that the ships of the West India trade sail and arrive at all times of the year, and are not absent from home above six or seven months. The voyages to and from India are regulated by the monsoons, and are of longer duration. Most of the ships to India, upon their return, have Lascars and Chinese sailors, as a part of their crews, who are unfit for our navy. West India ships are navigated by British seamen. If a war were to break out with a powerful naval state, and Ireland remain in its present unquiet situation, that country might be invaded and separated from Great Britain, long before the ships in the East Indies could come home, and give their sailors to our navy for its protection.

The planter claims that the West Indies should be deemed, and treated as a part of the British empire, and looks with confidence to His Majesty's government, and to Parliament, for the protection of his rights, and such relief as can be granted to him. He trusts that his agriculture will be considered to be as worthy of their care as the agriculture of the Mother Country. That they will not, because he is weak, and they are strong, deny him the justice due to him, the measure of which he willingly submits to their decision. He



further relies, that opinions long admitted to be correct, and acted upon as such, will not now be abandoned, for new and untried theories, which those, who have an interest in dispossessing others, for the benefit of themselves, will never fail to inculcate; and if listened to by the nation will verify the old fable, in which the substance was abandoned for the sake of the shadow.

## POSTSCRIPT.

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THE foregoing pages were written a few months ago, to which the price of sugar only, in January last, had been added, for the purpose of stating that fact, and the calculations dependant upon it, at a recent date. Since then a volume has been printed, by order of the Directors of the East India Company, containing all the information which they have been able to collect concerning the cultivation of the sugar-cane, and manufacture of sugar in the East. This collection is such, as was to be expected from the respectable body from which it has issued, the direction being composed of some of our first merchants in London, and, generally speaking, of gentlemen the most distinguished for talent and application of those who have returned from the East. It contains a manly account of the subject under consideration, without any attempt to inlist prejudice in their behalf, to misrepresent facts, or to practise concealment. The only thing to be wondered at is, that the East India Company should join their own enemies against the West Indians. Who are the people that wish to supplant the West Indians in the supply of the home market with sugar? The private traders to the East. Who desire to deprive the East India Company of their trade, and have, in a great measure, already succeeded, as to Hindostan? The private traders to that country. And does the company imagine, that after having ruined the West Indies, by the destruction of their monopoly in the sup-

plying of Great Britain with their staple article, they will become more favourable to the preservation of the company's monopolies than they have hitherto been? No such thing. They will have even a better chance of succeeding against them than now. Their arguments will be strengthened by the precedent they will make, for the rights of the East India Company are limited in time, by their charter, after the expiration of which Parliament can deal with them, without violence of original obligations, as it pleases. But those of the West Indians are vested rights, unlimited in time, and of which, without full compensation, they cannot, in justice, be deprived. It would seem, that it ought to be the policy of the East India Company and the West Indians to coalesce, and support their mutual interests against the private traders to the East Indies, whose intention it unquestionably is, to ruin both, for the benefit of themselves. The deviation from this obvious line of conduct can only be accounted for on the supposition, that some private traders have become members of the company, who, preferring their own interest to that of the general body, have had address enough to induce the company to pursue plans, advantageous indeed to the traders, but ruinous to the company.

Three other publications have appeared, viz. "Suggestions on East India Trade," by Mr. Princep. "On Protection to West India Sugar;" and the third, "On East and West India Sugar." All these have been written by men of speculative and singular opinions. Mr. Princep gives his advice freely to the sovereigns and their ministers, who have met in congress, in different places on the Continent, to concert measures for the continuance of the peace of Europe, and the tranquillity of their own dominions. These great objects of obvious and important duty to their subjects, afford to this gen-

tleman no gratification. "What better opportunity," says he, in pages 4 and 5, "for the common adjustment of some of those details, most important for facilitating the interchange of products between one nation and another, the establishment, for instance, of an uniformity of weights and measures, and of a common standard of metallic money, or the assimilation of the laws affecting trade and traders, and commercial instruments? These, and such as these, were matters of common import to all, worthy of the *grave attention* of so august a conclave. Their settlement would have done more to promote the *peace and welfare* of mankind at large, and to ensure the grateful recollection of posterity, *than any thing that has occupied the joint deliberations of princes* since the era of the Reformation." The sovereigns and their ministers, I dare say, take leave to differ from Mr. Princep, and considering themselves as less qualified, by their studies and habits, to adjust points of this sort, than a Royal Society of London, or an Institute of Paris, in one case, or an assemblage of lawyers in the other, and judging it more for the honour of themselves, and benefit of their subjects, to confine their attention to political objects, they have not even given themselves the trouble to bestow one thought on Mr. Princep's favourite measures.

The next gentleman begins with his advice to the government of this country, and the Directors of the East India Company, and to them, indeed, he is not sparing of it. He says, page 5, "It is only since the year 1813, that the real advantages to be derived from India have become apparent. The incongruous characters of merchant and sovereign, blended so unfortunately, both for India and Great Britain, in the East India Company, had, till that time, paralyzed the exertions of both countries, mutually to benefit each other. The triumph of



just commercial principles, by the experience of free trade, since 1813, has been complete. *Many things yet remain to be done, and the two characters must ultimately be separated.*" He goes on to say, that he would rather continue the government of India to the company than trust it with the executive of this country. But *before the extinction of the company, as a trading body,* several improvements are to be made. Indian built ships are to be entitled to British registry, while British ships, of all sizes, are freely to navigate the Indian seas. The laws relating to the commerce of India are to be separated from those relating to its political government. Colonization is to be allowed in India, and the Court of Directors are called upon, "boldly to repair the evils incident to their connection with India."

The third writer shews that the ground of his animosity to the West Indies is the circumstance of their being cultivated by slaves. Throughout the pamphlet there are bitter taunts on this subject, wherever he can make an opportunity for them, as if it were a crime in the West Indians to possess slaves, which the mother country, for her own benefit, not only supplied them with, but forced upon them. The writer has himself stated one of the facts that proves this assertion. "The slave-trade," says he, page 27, "was held with so firm a grasp," by Great Britain, let it be understood! "that when Virginia, in 1773, represented to Parliament the various evils which attended the continued importation of Africans into that state, and implored its prohibition, the proposal was indignantly rejected, as at variance with our commercial interests." The commercial interests of Great Britain!!! Can it then be imputed as a crime to the colonists, that they possess slaves, that they cultivate their lands with them, which in those countries can be cultivated beneficially to the proprietors, and to the mo-

ther country, in no other way? The emancipation of the slaves is held out as a thing that would be desirable in our own colonies, though wherever the slaves have obtained their freedom, and are in greater numbers than the whites, the latter have not been able to continue to live. Witness the present situation of St. Domingo. After the insurrection of the slaves in the French part of that island, the whites were obliged to retire, to save their lives. As soon as they were declared free in the Spanish part, their masters, and the other white inhabitants, were under the necessity of abandoning it. There are now no white people in St. Domingo, but one English agent, and about a dozen American agents. And what has been the advantage to the negroes themselves? They are in the most wretched state of misery and health, with the exception of those who possess the government, and the military, as our British naval officers, who have been there, and all other persons, who have had an opportunity of seeing their condition, attest. Their numbers are rapidly diminishing, and their situation cannot reasonably excite exultation in a thinking mind, or justify the relish which this writer appears to feel for the achievement of their liberty, by blood and vengeance\*.

This author recommends that we should follow in our own colonies, the example of those of Spain, which give considerable facilities to the slaves to purchase their own freedom, and to place themselves in the class of free people of colour, whose numbers must be considerably augmented by such laws. Nothing could be so pernicious as the taking of this advice. The free people of colour are much more dangerous to the peace of a co-

\* "Hayti towers among them (the West India islands) in all the strength and vigour of a liberty newly achieved by blood and vengeance." See page 61.

lony, and its dependence upon the Parent State, than the slaves. In the Spanish part of South America, as well as the Portuguese part of that Continent, it is a fact, that they are now all ranged on the side of Revolution. In St. Domingo, it was the free people of colour who first raised the standard of insurrection, and being unequal themselves to contend with the whites, excited the slaves to revolt \*, and afforded, I believe, the first example in modern history of a successful insurrection of the slaves. The Spanish part of that Island, in consequence of proximity and unlimited intercourse, followed the example with success, but the attempt of the Haytians to revolutionize Porto Rico and Martinique, insular in their form and more distant from them have failed, and they ever will prove abortive, where proper precautions are taken to prevent the fraternal embraces of the Black Republick.

The condition of the population of St. Domingo has been mentioned. The export of sugar from thence is now about 1000 casks a year, instead of 130,000 as before the Revolution. Its export is nearly confined to coffee, which is not in quantity above one half what that Island formerly made. The writer of the pamphlet on East and West India sugar, has given a pompous account of the increase of the American trade with Hayti. It is known that the United States engross, with little exception, the whole of the commerce of that country. We have now very little to do with it—the Germans still less—and wherever the whites are driven from the West Indies, whether by successful insurrection or by rendering their cultivation of no value to the planters, the same result will follow, as has ensued in St. Domingo. The whites will retire, the cultivation of sugar will cease, and

\* See Edwards's History of the West Indies, Vol. III. page 51.

the little trade the black population will possess, will be carried on by the Americans, whose small vessels, articles of export, and geographical situation, give them great advantages over the ships and merchants of this country.

The inconsistencies of these writers are not less remarkable than the singularity of their opinions. The author of the Pamphlet, entitled, *East and West India Sugar*, page 81, says, "Now if the proprietor (of a West India estate) is obstinately bent on cultivating sugar, at all hazards, and nothing else, it cannot be denied, that if its culture yield no profit, he and his slaves must starve." That it yields no profit, is asserted in many passages, and it is not recommended to him to cultivate any thing but provisions for the surplus of which, if it were general he could have no sale at all, and at the price he would get for them, if not generally cultivated, he could neither supply his negroes with clothes, salted fish, so necessary to the preservation of their health, medical assistance, or have white people to superintend them, or the means to pay for all the articles of British manufacture necessary for his plantation, and procure for himself comforts, and for his family education; yet in page 74, we are told, "If the culture of sugar should become much more profitable to our planters, the effect will inevitably be, that speculation will be excited; and that means will be found to smuggle slaves from Cuba into Jamaica, and from Surinam into Demerara," which in plain language means precisely this. Let him and his slaves starve, lest he should be liable to the temptation of acquiring one more slave. This humane recommendation is given by a writer, who wishes you to believe that the good of mankind is his sole object, and at a time when it is known by every man, that the smuggling of slaves into our own colonies, is absolutely impracticable. In the same pamphlet, page 83, the author says, "Now



what is there in the nature of things, (what there may be in the West Indian system is another question) to prevent the owner of his estate, instead of replanting one hundred acres of his land with sugar cane, to plant the whole or a part of it, with provisions, which would yield him their return on the spot, in the course of three or four months, and render all advance for the food of the slaves unnecessary? He would send less sugar, it is true, to market, but he and his slaves would have been fed, without the necessity of anticipating the proceeds of what he did send." This Gentleman clearly recommends the reduction of our growth of sugar, by the employment of a part of our labour in the cultivation of provisions, and so far as may suffice to avoid the purchase of food, we perfectly agree with him. But the author of the pamphlet on Protection to West India sugar, though he also recommends the growth of provisions, accounts such a reduction of the cultivation of the sugar cane, as must be the consequence, a sort of crime in us. "All their endeavours," he says, "are directed to the reduction of this surplus, (the quantity which is obliged to be exported) then, and then only can they command the home market, and remunerative prices. The alternative lies between narrowing production, or producing at a loss; can we doubt which will be adopted?" One Pamphlet (East and West India sugar) page 64, makes the following assertion. "But if a calculation were to be made, of the enormous waste of capital which this West Indian Lottery, for Lottery it is, has been continually causing, and is now causing, to this country, it would astonish the public." The other Pamphlet agrees with it, and yet we are told in page 42, of East and West India sugar, "The ordinary advantages accruing to him, (the British merchant) for such an advance of capital, is from 12 to 20 per cent. per annum, including

interest at 6 per cent. Now, upon my word, if this advantage of from 12 to 20 per cent. per annum, has been going on upwards of a century, it may more fairly be said, that the West India Colonies have been drained of their wealth for the benefit of Great Britain than that Great Britain has wasted her treasure upon them.

That the West Indians cannot stand the competition of East India sugar, in the home market, without a sufficient protecting duty, is quite clear. Accounts of its cost and import charges are given by our adversaries, which fully substantiate this fact. They admit, that its consumption in Great Britain is increasing, and they also affirm that it can be produced in India to an unlimited extent. Of this last position, before considered perhaps uncertain, there can be no longer any doubt, since the appearance of the Volume of the Directors of the East India Company. In page 108 of the first Appendix, they have made a calculation of the quantity of land in India, which would produce as much sugar as all the British and French Colonies, at the time of the insurrection of the slaves in St. Domingo. The quantity that they now produce is nearly the same; for although St. Domingo is to be blotted out of the calculation, the increased cultivation in our own old colonies, and the ceded ones, make up the difference. That work computes (page 109) that 649,523 acres, or 1015 British square miles of land will be sufficient for the purpose; and goes on to say, "Bengal, Behar, and the Company's part of Orissa, contain 149,217 British square miles. Any body who knows this country will immediately admit, that after allowing for the lighter soils, which are not adapted to sugar cane, as the greater part of Nuddea, the lands regularly inundated, the spaces taken up by lakes and rivers, the woods of Tipperah, the wilds of Ramgur, Palamow, Choota, Nagpore, and adjacent countries, and those parts of the Sunderbunds, which are never likely to

be cultivated, the additional culture of 1015 square miles of good arable land in sugar, for exportation, would not occasion any inconvenience to the inhabitants, by intruding upon land requisite to raise grain, cattle, &c." After reading this passage, no man can doubt that India, from the cheapness of the labour of its inhabitants, and the extent and fertility of its territory, can supply the world with sugar, such as it is in quality in regard to sweetness much cheaper than any other country.

But why should not India occupy these 1015 square miles of land, in the cultivation of some other object for exportation to Europe, by which she would be equally enriched, equally able to pay for the manufactures of this country, which she consumes, and not ruin the West Indians? I beg leave again to quote the Report of the East India Company, page 99, first Appendix: "It appears from what has been said, that the cultivation (of sugar) is expensive, and though the accounts from different quarters shew, that sugar is in Bengal more profitable than any other produce, *except mulberry*, and in Benares more profitable than any, *except cotton*, the returns are slow, and consequently require that the husbandman should be possessed of a good capital or stock, to enable him to defray the expence, to wait the slowness of returns, and to pay a heavy interest for loans he may be obliged to take up, and to be able to bear the loss, in case the crop should entirely be destroyed by unfavourable seasons, a risk to which it appears liable." From this it is clear, that it would be more advantageous to the natives to cultivate mulberry trees for silk in Bengal, and cotton in Benares, than sugar. But this would not ruin the Planters in the West Indies, and therefore would not suit the writers of the pamphlets I have been remarking upon. Where would be the disadvantage to India, if it were encouraged to produce silk and cotton, for exportation to

Europe, instead of sugar? There are also other articles of cultivation, which they may bestow their labour upon, much to the advantage of this country and themselves. Tea, which we are obliged to purchase from the Chinese, naturally presents itself as one of them. Coffee they may produce, as well as the inhabitants of Java and Arabia, for consumption on the Continent of Europe. There are many drugs and dyes which they might cultivate, much to the advantage of Europe and India, without injuring the West Indies. Why not encourage the growth of such articles instead of sugar? Why will nothing answer the objects of gentlemen who trade with India, but the production of sugar for exportation to Europe, to the destruction of the West Indies, colonies that have already been most cruelly used, and which can only be saved by giving the people of Hindostan a direction to the cultivation of other objects, as valuable as sugar to themselves, and less injurious to the West Indies. It is most highly the interest of Great Britain herself, that this should be done. Her supply of sugar must come either from the East or the West. If from the East Indies, the 1015 square miles, which would be required to be cultivated in the sugar cane for this supply, would be occupied, and would not be convertible to the growth of mulberry trees, or any thing else. The sugar estates in the West Indies would be abandoned, as their lands are unfit for any other exportable produce. The West Indies therefore, as to all useful purposes, would be annihilated. Great Britain would have no further trade with them. But if the 1015 square miles, or more, which can be spared in India, from the supply of the inhabitants with food, were cultivated in some other production fit for importation to Europe, the Mother Country would possess the advantages derived from both, instead of one only. She would continue to have the benefit of her West India sugar trade,



and would possess the advantages attendant on an increased cultivation of other articles in India, which could not exist with the supply of sugar from that country. In short, she would possess the trade of two valuable articles of commerce instead of one. To do otherwise is wastefully to use her possessions.

Our opponents state that there was an agreement, or compact, between the West Indians and traders to the East Indies, at the opening of the trade in 1813, that the protecting duty on all kinds of East India sugar should be 10s. per cwt. and no more, which they allege has been broken by the West Indians, in consequence of their application for a further protection, but one of the pamphlets admits, that it was not necessary for the West Indians to move first, to justify them to press for an equalization of the duties. We know of no compact with the East Indians to the effect insisted upon. We claimed of government a protecting duty, to the extent of a fair remunerating price. Our claim was admitted to be just, both by the Government and the East Indians themselves; but in the calculation of what duty would constitute a protection, it was necessary to take into the account the probable rate of freight from the East. In this we were deceived by those who managed on the part of the East Indians. We were given to understand that they would pay 18s. per cwt. on sugar in time of war, and 12s. in time of peace. This, experience shews to have been an erroneous calculation. The freight of sugar is not now one half of the peace freight expected; and this circumstance, until the war and peace freights rise to what has been stated, which is no way probable by many shillings per cwt., gives the West Indians a well founded claim to an increased protecting duty, independent of the higher ground which they take, and feel justified in taking, that they are entitled to such a protection, let the

amount be what it will, as will prevent their being met in the home market by East India sugar, to the extent of a remunerating price for their own.

It has always been the policy of Great Britain to encourage, both from her colonies and foreign parts, the importation of every raw article which can be manufactured in this country, either for home use or export, with the double view of benefiting our manufactures, and increasing the quantity of our shipping; the raw article always requiring more tonnage than the manufactured article. Upon this principle she laid a duty of 5s. per cwt. upon West India clayed sugar, over and above whatever duty might be payable on brown or Muscovado. It has certainly had the effect of causing very little sugar to be clayed in the West Indies, and this is exactly what the interest of the Mother Country requires. But the traders to the East Indies, it was discovered, brought home sugars which had been purified and refined by processes similar in effect to claying, and paid upon it the same duty as upon the raw or Muscovado sugar of the East. The process is described in page 100, of the first Appendix to the volume of the Directors of the East India Company; and the sugar thus purified of its molasses and dirt, bears in India the distinctive name of *Chinee*\*, as sugars which have been clayed in the West Indies are called clayed sugars, to distinguish them from Muscovado. The process is as follows: "The goor," that is, the first granulation or muscovado, "goes to the boiler," who may be called the refiner, "and he purifies it by different processes, according to the kind of sugar he wants to produce. The general process is by boiling the goor. In some places the molasses are first drawn off

\* I presume from the art of purification and refinement having been first practised in China.

from the grain, and the goor is then boiled, mixed with water, or milk and water, and purified. In others, the goor is only boiled and purified. Milk lime and ley from plantain ashes, are used to cleanse and granulate the sugar. When boiled sufficiently, it is put into earthen pots, and two particular sorts of aquatic weeds are used to drain off the syrup, as clay is by the European refiners. In Rungpore, and Dinagapore, clay, as well as weeds, is used to draw off the syrup. The sugar thus prepared, is called Chinee, and in this state is the greater part of what is sent to Europe and America." This is a perfect process of refining. The milk is an animal production containing much mucilage, which assists the colour, and separation of the dirt, as our refiners, for the same purposes, are in the habit of employing the animal mucilages of blood and whites of eggs, and the animal carbon of burnt bones. The aquatic weeds occasion water to percolate slowly through the sugar, put into pots, as in Europe, where clay is used. The water has a greater chemical affinity with molasses than with chrysallized sugar, carries away the former and purifies the latter. In fact, the sugar from India, called Chinee, is not only similar to that from the West Indies, styled clayed sugar, but it is refined sugar, which from the West Indies is excluded under a prohibitory duty. It is not indeed in loaves, but in powder, like crushed lumps, from which it only differs in being a little less boiled, and displaces in the home consumption the crushed lumps of our own refiners.

The Chinee from the East Indies ought to be excluded from consumption in this country, in justice both to our refiners and the West Indies, from which sugar that had undergone the same operation, would not be admitted. It is not sufficient to say, that it is badly refined, because the Indian process may improve: if admitted, it ought

to be subject to higher duties than the clayed sugars of the West Indies, which have only been deprived of their molasses by the percolation of water, but have never been melted a second time ; and purified and improved in colour by animal mucilage, as the sugar of Bengal has. Their process is the same substantially as that of our refiners in Europe, and the difference of product is only owing to the difference of dexterity.

Our opponents assert, that it is necessary they should bring sugar from the East, for home consumption, to ballast their ships ; and they allege, that one third of the cargo is required to be filled with what they call dead weight, viz. sugar, saltpetre, or rice. A British vessel of 400 tons, I understand from ship-brokers, to enable it to carry cotton and other light freight with safety, will require about a fourth, or a hundred tons of ballast. A considerable part of this, if East India sugar were altogether excluded, would still consist of saltpetre and rice. If she were therefore obliged to take a portion of these hundred tons of Ganges' sand, as it is stated she would be, I see no great hardship in the case, considering that all our ships in other trades are under the necessity of performing one of their voyages, out or home, almost entirely in ballast. The traders to the East ought not to be better off than our traders to other countries, and cannot expect, with reason, that the Legislature should sacrifice the rights of others to their interests.

In their writings, our adversaries insist, 1st. That the British sugar colonies never had a monopoly of the home market for their staple articles, and next, that if they had, the right to such a preference has been done away with, by the acts of the last Sessions of Parliament. Do they suppose that all the statesmen and historians who have spoken and written of the colonial system of Great Britain, and the double monopoly founded upon it, in



reason and in mutual interest, have for a century and a half been preaching about a non-entity? This is certainly asserting a great deal, and is not much in commendation of their modesty. I will refer them to the acts of parliament which established the navigation laws, and regulate the trade of the Mother Country and the Colonies; and to the subsequent recognition of ministers. These are our muniments. Do they expect a regular treaty of commerce to be produced between Great Britain and her Colonies, as between sovereign and independent nations? If they do, nobody else will. But these gentlemen maintain the reverse of what is known by every clerk, in every custom-house, and are therefore bound to make out their own case, in disproof of the existence of the mutual monopoly. The circumstance of India belonging to Great Britain, does not admit her into the rights of the Colonies. They are under colonial regulations: she is not. India may send her produce where she pleases, in whatever vessels she pleases; may import what she pleases, from whom she pleases. Her trade is as unshackled as that of Great Britain. The Colonies are bound to use British vessels and British manufactures. The beef, the pork, the pickled and dried fish, which they require in large quantities, must come from Great Britain, or her North American Colonies. These obligations on the Colonies, and not on India, constitute an immense difference, and render it impossible that India can have the rights of Colonies without their restrictions. But, say the traders to the East, we are willing to release you from your's. The West Indians are placed by the acts of Great Britain in a peculiar situation. While we have, by the entire abolition of the Slave Trade, limited the means of cultivation in our own old Colonies, the cheap and easy access which the foreign colonies have thereby obtained to the importation of

Negroes, has enormously encreased their production of sugar. The accession of the conquered colonies, and their admission to all the rights of colonies, has in the mean time greatly added to the surplus of our importation, beyond the British consumption. Add to this the new rivalry we have to encounter by the encouragement given to the import of sugar from the East, and the acknowledged fact, that the price at the home market must be greatly dependant upon the price we can obtain abroad, for the surplus we export. With these disadvantages, brought upon us by the government, against our own wishes and remonstrances, we cannot accept the challenge of our adversaries. We claim the full benefit of the colonial system, to which India from its distance, its magnitude, and its being partly possessed by other powers, never can be subjected. These are our rights. These, as far as we are able to declare our opinions, we are determined to continue to possess, or to obtain full and ample compensation for them. Take from us the home market for our sugar, and we perish.

“The acts of the last sessions of Parliament,” say our adversaries, “have released you, or nearly so, from the fetters of the colonial system.” These new laws had a twofold object. One was to restore, in American vessels, because it could be done in no other way, the old intercourse which existed between the colonies and the United States of America, with protecting duties in favour of the lumber and provisions of our own colonies, Canada and Nova Scotia. To this was added the intercourse with other countries in America, which had long existed under the Free Port Act. There was no novelty introduced, and it is true that the act was solicited by the West Indians, as likely to give some small relief, by restoring the market for rum, of which they had been de-

prived. The other act permitted the produce of the West Indies to go to Europe, in British ships, and the importation from thence in British ships also, of certain enumerated articles, which Great Britain and Ireland could not furnish. It was not granted at the request of the West Indians, though they had enjoyed it by the 12th of Geo. II. chap. 30. a law which was repealed by the 34th Geo. III. chap. 42. when sugar became very dear in Europe, in consequence of the destruction of the cultivation of St. Domingo. Now with any appearance of reason, can these measures, which do not lose sight of the interests of British shipping, as far as it is practicable to protect it, or British manufactures in the smallest respect, the substantial parts of the double monopoly on the side of the Mother Country, be considered as shaking to its foundation that long established and useful system? The American Intercourse Act granted nothing that had not been allowed for years before, and which had been found by experience no way detrimental to Great Britain, and the other act was an experiment suggested by ministers themselves to save the charges on British plantation sugar, re-exported from this country to the continent, by sending it there directly from the West Indies which had been permitted since the time of George II. These measures, as they guard with particular strictness, the interests of the manufactures and shipping of Great Britain, cannot, in any essential degree, be considered as relaxing the system by which this country and its colonies have so long been bound together. But, say our opponents, British manufactures, and British shipping are cheaper than those of any other nation. This is not universally true of manufactures. To give an example: the linens of Germany are cheaper and better than those of Great Britain and Ireland, and as to our shipping, though our freights may be now low,

in consequence of the cessation of the calls of government for transports, and the diminution of our carrying trade, after a war of unexampled length, during which we possessed the trade of the world, yet the expence of ship building and repairing in this country, is so considerable that after our present vessels are worn out, it may be doubted whether we shall be able to navigate as cheaply as the Americans. They have already beat us out of the trade with St. Domingo, and Cuba, which they almost engross; and may become the carriers of those countries that have no ships of their own, or do not protect their navigation. If this should occur, what will become of the naval power of Great Britain, if she do not adhere to her navigation laws and her colonial system?

The West Indians by the laws of this country have a vested interest in the monopoly of the home market, to the extent of a remunerating price. Time and long possession confirm their title to it, and if it be considered for the good of the community at large, that it should be taken away from them, they are entitled from the community to full and ample compensation. This our adversaries do not deny, but they endeavour to shew that our properties in the West Indies are worth nothing, and therefore that it will be matter of little violence to deprive us of any right they possess. We must beg leave to differ from our opponents as to this last position. If the government and parliament have made our properties unproductive, they are nevertheless bound, not to take advantage of their own wrong doing, but to pay us for them at a productive price. To suppose otherwise, would be an insult to the honour of parliament, whose integrity, as it is its highest commendation, is the most sure means of the preservation of its power. But, say our adversaries, though the original owners of the es-



tates in the West Indies may be entitled to compensation, the purchasers from them have no such right. They have bought under certain chances and are to abide by them. "Nine out of ten estates in the West Indies have changed hands, within the last twenty or thirty years." Where the writer of the pamphlet on Protection to West India Sugar has derived his authority for this assertion, I do not know, and I believe none exists. It is one of those pious frauds which certain men occasionally indulge in, the better to promote the effects of their arguments. The reverse of the figures I should believe to be more nearly correct. One in ten I have no doubt has changed hands in the time mentioned. Where also did these writers get their notions of justice, or of law? Any man, who purchases an estate, is entitled to all the rights of the original possessor, unless some of them are expressly retained. If the manor of Scrivelsby, for example, were sold, the new possessor would be entitled to be Champion of England, at the coronation of our kings. The right is inherent in the estate, not in the man who has disposed of it, and every owner of an estate in the West Indies, is entitled to the same compensation that the original proprietor, or his descendants, would be entitled to. The estate cannot be bought without its carrying a right to compensation, if for the public good it is to be sacrificed. In this country, if a shop is to be pulled down, to make room for a more ornamental street, whether built or purchased by the owner, he must be paid, not only for his house, but for the loss of his trade, and that loss, as well as the value of his house, must be estimated by a jury of his country. It is not to be valued by his enemies, or by the surveyors of the public, but by his equals, whose situation may become the same, and who therefore have a strong motive for doing him justice. But the enemies

of the West Indians further assert, that the ceded colonies have no right to such compensation, though the old colonies of Great Britain, perhaps, may. The ceded colonies, except in point of time, have the same rights as the very oldest of the others. They have been taken under the protection of the nation, have been placed under colonial regulations, and are therefore entitled to all colonial advantages. They cannot now be severed from the rest, and subjected to a different measure of justice. If it had been intended to destroy them without compensation, they should not have been retained at the termination of the war.

Much stress, and with great propriety, is laid on the intentions of the Legislature, in the duties it has affixed, at various times, to sugar imported from the British colonies in the West Indies, and from our possessions in the East, and the writer of the pamphlet on Protection to West India Sugar, insinuates that there never was any preference given to West India Sugar. He exclaims: "Have those who speculated in the West India plantations under these regulations of the Legislature a right to turn round and say, Oh! we trusted to the supineness of the company, and we knew they never would send home any quantity to affect us in the home market. Surely this is private speculation, on private judgment, not on the pledged faith of the Legislature." He therefore seems to admit, as in reason he ought to do, that if it can be shown parliament had from the origin of the sugar trade given a decided preference to West India sugar, over that from the East, the existence of such laws, under which the West Indies were encouraged to be settled, were a valid stipulation on the part of the Mother Country, that the monopoly of the home market should be continued to them. From our enemies we are not to expect much candour, for in this instance, as in

others, they expose only as much of the evidence as they judge will answer their purpose. Their history of the duties of East and West India sugar, commences at the year 1787, when they take it for granted that Parliament meant to enact an *ad valorem* duty of 37*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.* to be paid on East India sugar. The preceding part of the history is totally omitted, because the exposure of it would not suit their views. We are obliged therefore to take up the subject of the duties at its commencement, and the facts will show, that East India sugar was always intended to be treated by the Legislature as foreign sugar, till the year 1798, when sugar became very dear in Europe, occasioned by the ruin of St. Domingo. It is no way sufficient for them to say, that very little sugar came from the East to this country previous to the year 1791. It was known that it could be brought from thence, and small parcels had been actually imported, the first of which, according to the records of the Custom-house, was in 1696, about six years after the Charter of the Company. It was excluded as an article of commerce, on account of its being liable to the same duties as foreign sugar, as well as in consequence of the large freights of the Company's ships. If Parliament had meant to encourage its importation, the taking it out of the class of foreign sugar, would have been the obvious way to effect the purpose, and there can be no doubt would have been done. The 12th of Charles II. chap. 4. was the first law, which imposed duties on sugar. Two distinctions only were made in it, and in all the subsequent acts to the year 1798, viz. sugar the growth of the British Plantations, and sugar not the produce of the British Plantations. In the latter, of course, the sugars of the East Indies were included. The duties from the two places will show the intentions of Parliament.

	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
12 Charles II. ch. 4... W. India,	1 5 $\frac{2}{8}$	E. India, 3 9 $\frac{12}{8}$
9 & 10 Will. III. ch. 23. Ditto....	1 5 $\frac{2}{8}$	Ditto.... 3 9 $\frac{12}{8}$
2 & 3 Ann, ch. 9..... Ditto....	0 5 $\frac{4}{8}$	Ditto.... 1 3 $\frac{4}{8}$
3 & 4, ch. 5..... Ditto....	0 0	Ditto.... 2 6 $\frac{8}{8}$
21 George II. ch. 2.... Ditto....	1 6	Ditto.... 4 0
32 ch. 10..... Ditto....	1 6	Ditto.... 4 0
19 George III. ch. 25.. Ditto....	0 3 $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$	Ditto.... 11 $\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{4}{8}$
21 ch. 16..... Ditto....	5 1 $\frac{1}{8}$	Ditto.... 5 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$
	<hr/> Per cwt. 11 8 $\frac{14}{8}$	<hr/> Per cwt. 25 10 $\frac{16}{8}$

By the 27th of George III. all the duties on sugars were repealed, and in their stead were imposed on British Plantation Muscovado, 12s. 4d. per cwt., and on all other sugar of the same description, 1l. 7s. 2d.

By this law, the ad valorem duty of 37l. 16s. 3d. on East India sugar, was considered to be established. That such was not the intention of the Legislature, but that it meant to subject East India sugar to the foreign duty, as it always had done, is plain from several circumstances. *The 15th section enacts, that all goods imported by the East India Company from places within the limits of their charter, the duties on which are not specified in schedule A. are to be liable to the duties set forth in table B.* Table A, which is entitled a schedule of the net duties payable on the importation into this kingdom of certain goods, wares, and merchandize, therein enumerated, contains the duties on sugars, as under :

	<i>£. s. d.</i>
Sugar candy, brown, the cwt. - - -	2 15 0
Ditto, imported by the East India company -	4 19 0



	£.	s.	d
White sugar candy, the cwt. - - -	4	2	6
Ditto, imported by the East India company -	7	8	6
Refined sugar, the cwt. - - -	4	18	8
Brown and Muscovado, not of the British plantations, the cwt. - - - - -	1	7	2
White sugar, not of the British plantations -	2	5	6
Brown and Muscovado, of the British plantations	0	12	4
White, of the British plantations - - -	1	9	0
From any of the British colonies, or plantations, on the continent of America, upon the importation to be warehoused, the cwt. - - -	0	0	3

The duties on sugar were therefore specified in table A. in intelligible language, and the distinction for Muscovado and white sugar, was, sugar of the British plantations, and sugar not of the British plantations. The act therefore appears to have intended to continue the exclusion of East India sugar, as had always been done, unless it paid the foreign duty of *1l. 7s. 2d.* per cwt. But a very slight, and seemingly unimportant inadvertence occurred, in the wording of a newly introduced provision which the East Indians found very useful, as soon as it became desirable to them to pervert the law to their purpose. Table B. is entitled “a Table of the Duties of Customs payable on the Importation into this Kingdom, and of the Drawbacks to be allowed on the Exportation from thence, of Goods, Wares, and Merchandize, being imported by the united company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, *and not being particularly charged with duty when so imported.*” About the end of this table were the following words: “Manufactured goods, wares and merchandize, *not otherwise particularly enumerated, or described* for every 100*l.* of the true and real value thereof, according to the gross price, at which such goods shall have been sold, at the public sales of the united company of merchants of England, trading to

the East Indies, 37*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.*” This provision ought not to have applied to sugar, because the duties on the different sorts of it were enumerated in the table A. as already shown, but it was merely introduced to affix a duty to such trifling articles from the East Indies as former revenue laws may not have noticed, but which it was now judged ought to pay an ad valorem duty upon importation.

Throughout the act there was no favour shewn to the East India Company. A variety of articles, when imported by them paid heavier duties than when obtained from foreigners. For example,

	£. s. d.		
Amber, 1 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i> the lb. If imported by the E. I. Company	0	1	5
Walking Canes, per 1000, £1 18 6 If by E. I. Comp.	2	1	2
Rattans, per 1000 . . . . .	0	16	6
Ditto . . . . .	0	19	3
Elephants’ Teeth, the cwt. 1 6 3 Ditto . . . . .	1	10	10
Plate, wrought, of gold, } per ounce . . . . . }	1	10	0
Ditto . . . . .	2	7	8
Rice, per cwt. . . . .	0	7	4
Ditto . . . . .	0	8	10
Salt Petre . . . . .	0	2	3
Ditto . . . . .	0	7	9
Snuff from British or } Spanish West Indies.. }	0	1	6
Ditto . . . . .	0	3	3

Every man accustomed to the construction of acts of parliament, and at all acquainted with our policy, will allow, that the intention of parliament, in this act, was to continue to subject East India sugar to the foreign duties, whatever the strict interpretation of the wording, evidently hastily and unguardedly adopted, may be. It would not otherwise have enacted a larger duty on East India sugar candy, than on that from other places, and would not have imposed a prohibitory duty on refined sugar from our own colonies, while it was allowed to be received from the East Indies at an ad valorem duty, amounting only to about one third of the prohibitory duty. Both these consequences, absurd as they must appear to be, would follow from the same interpretation, that admitted East India sugar on the ad valorem duty.

The act of the 38th of Geo. III. chap. 76th, recognized its admission, but the 43d of Geo. III. chap. 68th, is the first law which rated East India sugar specifically. It was judged proper, at a time of scarcity, to open the markets of Great Britain to East India sugar, for the purpose of maintaining moderate and fair prices to the consumer in this country. When the necessity has ceased, and the grower of sugar in the West Indies becomes, in his turn, the sufferer, surely there should be a reasonable but sufficient recurrence to the principles of the old law pervading every act of parliament for a century and a half, which protected the sugars of the West Indies against those of the East, and all other parts of the world, and under the faith of the continuance of which the estates in our old colonies were settled and cultivated.

Some of the arguments in favour of an equalization of the duty upon sugar, contained in the pamphlet on Protection to West India Sugar, are derived from the abstract principles of free trade, forgetting that free trade, as between nation and nation, or the different parts of the same nation, never did exist, and therefore, as far as experience goes, we are warranted in believing never will exist. The least industrious countries will always protect their own productions, and shipping, against those of more industrious people than themselves. For example, the Catholic countries are less industrious than the Protestant ones, and those in the south of Europe, are naturally less so than those situated more northerly, from the difference of climate, and energy of the human frame. These countries have a right to call upon their respective governments for protection, who would be in error, if they were not to give it. Thus the intercourse between two sovereign nations is always matter of convention, each giving up some points of interest, until they can agree upon terms, which are upon the whole

mutually advantageous. As between different parts of the same empire, the trade is regulated upon motives of state policy, of advantage to the whole empire, and the original engagements of the parent state, to each member of it. If two portions of its dominions can produce the same article, it is just, that the one, which possesses the supply, should be preferred to that which is only endeavouring to rival it; and good sense directs that the latter should apply its industry to some other object. If one is more precarious in its tenure than another, that is a ground of preference. If one contributes more than another to the defence of all parts of the empire, and particularly the Mother Country, that is a reason for superior encouragement. But the advantages must be clear and decided, and the necessity of the rivalry undeniable, to justify their prevailing against prior rights. Justice, as well as policy demands, that these considerations should be attended to, in the regulation of the commerce of the different parts of the same empire. Do not they prevail in the Corn Laws, so necessary to the protection of the agriculture of the Mother Country? Are not every one of our manufactures upheld by them, as far as the consumption of Great Britain and her colonies are concerned? Is it only in the case of the West Indies, that this country is to shut its eyes to their interests, and say, like a hard-hearted parent, I will encourage all but you.

Our adversaries assert that the East Indies are more beneficial to the Mother Country, than her colonies in the West Indies, whose government and protection cost us much money, while the East Indies defray their own expences. That their protection costs us money, is to a degree true, but then it is so only to a trifling degree. The domestic government of the colonies, if I may be allowed the expression, is supported at their own ex-



pence, and there are certain contributions towards the expences of protection, &c. in the different islands. Jamaica subsists 2000 of His Majesty's troops stationed there. In the other islands there is the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. duty on their produce, and in the colonies without legislatures, the taxes imposed by order of His Majesty in council. These go a very considerable way to lighten the burthen of protection. The naval force both in the East, and West, is supported by the Mother Country. The total annual expence therefore of the West India colonies to Great Britain, would be found upon examination to be very small indeed, and nothing, in comparison to the advantage derived from the manufactures they consume, and the sum annually expended at Home by the resident planters. As every thing the poor West Indians do, must be found fault with, they are blamed for living in this country at all, though that residence is attended with benefit to Great Britain, both in the money they expend here, and in the preservation of that affection towards the parent state which is so much to be desired, and which will always contribute materially to the continuance of their loyalty and dependence. I am not aware of any vast advantages the East has to boast of, except the manufactures which go direct to the Precedencies, not comprehending those to China, &c. and the money sent home by successful adventures, but it is also to be remembered, that there are many adventurers in the West Indies, who do not invest their money there, but bring it home, to add, equally with those from the East, to the capital of this country. The advantage derived by Great Britain from the East Indies, let the amount be what it may, does not result from its sugar trade with Europe. She possessed them antecedently to the year 1791, when sugar was first brought to Europe in considerable quantity from India, and she will con-

tinue to possess them, if the importation of sugar from that quarter were to cease altogether.

One of our opponents, the writer on protection to West India sugar, gives an inaccurate statement of the exports of British manufactures to the East, and the West Indies, making it most considerable to the former. From the publication, entitled, Administration of the affairs of Great Britain, which he seems to deem an official work, They are stated for the year 1821, as follow. To the British West Indies, 4,347,042*l*. To the East Indies and China, 3,272,817*l*. being upwards of a million less. The Pamphlet on East and West India sugar, predicts the diminution of this export even to a trifle, to half a million, when a direct trade shall take place to the Spanish colonies. This direct trade has existed for some time, and it appears that our exports to them, in the same year, was 917,916*l*. The exports to Cuba are included under the head of Foreign West Indies, which amount to 1,257,049*l*. It is not therefore probable that much of what goes now to our West Indies, is re-exported to those countries to which it can go direct; although it is possible, both in the East and the West Indies, that our manufacturers would confide their goods more readily to houses long established at Calcutta, or in Jamaica, than trust them with Malays or Spaniards. But it would be nearly endless to shew the errors of the predictions of these Gentlemen, who view every thing in the East through a telescope of Herschell, and every thing in the West, with a microscopic and jaundiced eye.

The superior security of our possession of Hindostan over the West Indies, is endeavoured to be maintained in a way which sets the doctrine of probabilities at defiance, though they allow that extensive country to be subject to risks. India is kept in subjection by a large military force, chiefly of native troops, the officers of

which only were born in Great Britain and Ireland. That government has sometimes been threatened with a revolt of the military. Revolutions effected by the instrumentality of an unfaithful soldiery, seem to be among the prevailing political features of the day, and may reach to India. The passive character of the natives, which has been boasted of, is not too much to be relied on, in this age of experiments, and as they have arms in their hands, they may use them to assert their independence whenever they please. Their being well governed constitutes no obstacle to the plans of the ambitious. "The French," says Burke, "rebelled against a hand holding out favours and immunities to them." But besides this danger, India may be wrested from you by the arms of a powerful nation, whose soldiery we may not be able to resist, and to whose success our navy could oppose no impediment. The idea of invading India for the purpose either of permanent conquest, or of restoring it to the domination of the ancient Rajahs, is not a new one. It was entertained by the French cabinet, as we are informed in the memoirs of the Marquis de Boullie, immediately after the American war. It was again an object of the French government, during the Revolutionary war. In the conversations O'Meara had with the Ex-Emperor Buonaparte at St. Helena, page 375, of the first volume, that personage declares, "that Egypt once in possession of the French, farewell India to the English. It was one of the grand projects I aimed at." And in another place, page 380, he asserts, "that if Paul had lived, we should have lost India before now. An agreement was made between Paul and myself to invade it, I furnished the plan." He then went into the particulars of it, and concluded by saying, "that the first year of war that you will have with the Russians, they will take India from you." Buonaparte, it must be al-

lowed, had his faults; he was ambitious, impatient, and unjust, but the want of sagacity never was imputed to him. Those who knew him best, concur in considering him to have been a good general, and an able politician. Designs therefore have been formed against India, which the growing power of Russia, and its want of a sufficient revenue, with which the conquest of Hindostan would furnish it, leave considerable ground to entertain a fear, that these designs may not have been altogether abandoned. But our opponents insist, that if India were in other hands, than ours, we should still enjoy the commerce of it, and they ask if we lost the trade of the United States, after their independence? The question might be answered by another. Do we now monopolize the carrying trade of that great country, and have we not a formidable rival at sea in the independent power, which possesses it? But there is a wide difference between the two cases. America was not then a manufacturing country, and we see that as fast as she can get manufactures of her own, she protects them by heavy duties upon such foreign ones as interfere with them. The East Indies is a manufacturing country, and if lost to Great Britain, the very first act of the new government would probably be, to protect her own manufactures, by excluding those of this country.

But our adversaries endeavour to terrify us with a most exaggerated statement of the danger of our West India colonies. They may wish their opinions to be true, but it is probable, that few other people will be induced to believe them. There are no designs that we know of, formed against our insular colonies in the West Indies, on the part of Powers sufficiently strong to carry them into execution. The commission which they suppose will be given on the part of the United States, to black troops, to emancipate their fellow blacks, is for two rea-



sons a matter of mere fancy. In the United States they have no black troops, and must have a superior navy to ours, to render the invasion of our colonies practicable. The example that we are alleged to have set them, was unauthorised by our Government, and I believe by a decision of the Referee submitted to, we are to pay for the slaves so withdrawn from their masters. This example therefore would constitute no justification to the Americans to follow it, and as they possess slaves themselves in greater numbers than we do, they would be apprehensive of retaliation. Hayti presents a more real subject for apprehension. She has shewn herself to be very ready to take advantage of the weakness of her neighbours, but wherever ordinary precautions are taken by the whites, and arms kept out of the hands of the slaves, any attempts at insurrection, by whomsoever instigated, must always fail. Of all our islands it is most necessary in Jamaica, that we should be guarded against Hayti, and the Legislature of this country has very wisely adopted laws prohibiting all intercourse with that Republick. Jamaica is at a considerable distance from Hayti, and exactly to leeward, which constitutes a great advantage in those latitudes, where the trade wind, blowing from east to west, is perpetual through the year. An invasion of Jamaica from Hayti is impracticable, because the Haytians have no ships, because our navy must meet them, and defeat their object at sea, and because they must know, that in the event of a disaster, they could never get back again. Not a man would be able to return. There are no risks to be apprehended from other revolutionized countries in that part of the world, for their governments must be white, let the condition of the negroes be what it will. In Mexico, the white population is considered to be about four millions. The slaves were not above ten thousand, who were chiefly employed

in the cultivation of sugar on the plains of La Vera Cruz. They are now emancipated, and the cultivation of sugar instantly disappeared. In Columbia, the white inhabitants were reported to be two millions and a half, and the slaves about sixty thousand. Many of these were purchased and manumitted by the Government, in consideration of their having borne arms during the Revolution, and such as have been born since the æra of the Republic, are declared free. The Brazils are too distant to affect the security of our colonies, but there the whites prevail in numbers, being about three millions, and the slaves about eight hundred thousand. In Cuba, a more important place for us to look at with jealousy, the white population is about four hundred thousand, the free people of colour, about eighty thousand, and the slaves about two hundred and fifty thousand. The government therefore must be white, whether the island continue subject to Spain, or become independent. From a neighbouring white government no mischief is to be apprehended. If it possess slaves, and disturb ours, it would be liable to retaliation, and if it have no slaves, the zeal of black emancipation, at the expence of difficulties to themselves, will never enter into their conception.—To evince the precarious tenure by which our colonies in the West Indies is held, the writer on East and West India Sugars adduces the difficulty which was formed in Jamaica, in reducing a few hundreds of revolted Maroons. These people had arms in their hands, furnished by the government of the island, and got possession of an inaccessible country. Their limited number was the cause of their long resistance. If in much greater numbers, the want of food would have sooner starved them into submission. A single company of regular troops, or militia, would have been sufficient to destroy them in regular battle, but this mode of warfare they carefully

avoided, and adopted the more mischievous plan of ambush, and concealment in their strong holds. During the whole of this war, the attachment of the slaves to the whites was evinced in a manner which no theoretical speculations can contradict. Their behaviour throughout the island was most orderly and exemplary, and such of them as were required to attend their masters in the field, conducted themselves with a fidelity, and even with a zeal, which could not have been surpassed.

The last arguments that I shall advert to are those on the shipping engaged in the trade of Great Britain with the East and West Indies. It is certainly by her commerce that the naval power of any nation can be maintained. It is not denied that this country will have the carrying of all the sugar she consumes, whether it comes from the East or West Indies, or from any other part of the globe. Our opponents assert that the long and dangerous voyages to the East, as compared with those to the West Indies, give their sailors an advantage over those of the latter trade, notwithstanding they will have, upon their return home, some of what Mr. Princep calls (page 44,) "the enfeebled native sailors of our eastern territories." The length of the voyage may require their ships to sail with a few more men than our West Indiamen, but greater numbers will perish in the longer voyage, whose place must be supplied with Lascars. As I have always understood that our coasting seamen were the most valuable we possessed, because they were as excellent in themselves as any others, and were always at hand when wanted by their country in time of war, I cannot understand why the longer and more dangerous voyage to the East Indies, than from Newcastle to London, can form a nursery of better or more useful sailors. It may, indeed, form more expert navigators, but not better seamen; and as those con-

cerned in the navigation of our men of war, are officers of the navy, they require no assistance from any supposed superiority of the seamen of ships to India. Other vessels are accustomed to gales of wind as well as they, and have the same methods of avoiding danger. But this essential disadvantage attaches to the shipping to the East. Their voyages are so long, generally from twelve to eighteen months, in time of peace, that their sailors are not to be procured by our navy when they are wanted, either for the purpose of defending our own coasts, or of preparing expeditions by which our enemies may be annoyed. The voyages to the West Indies require from six to seven months in time of peace, and upon the return of the ships the seamen are at hand to be removed to the navy, if wanted for the service of the nation. The circumstance too of their going and coming at all times of the year, without the interruption of monsoons, gives a great advantage to the West India trade in a political point of view. When France has restored her navy, and the United States of America have made theirs formidable, we may suppose many conjunctures to arise in which Great Britain may suffer both loss of dominion and honour, if she is to depend for the manning of her fleets upon the ships trading to the East Indies.

Thus have I endeavoured to examine briefly the principal arguments in the publications of our enemies, avoiding the topics of slavery and East India shipping, which are irrelevant to the question at issue. It has been my aim, and I hope not unsuccessfully, to support three positions, 1st, That the West Indians are entitled to a protecting duty on East India sugar, to the extent of a remunerating price for their own. 2dly, That neither the manufacturers of Great Britain, nor the natives of Hindostan, can suffer by giving to the industry of



Bengal a direction to the cultivation of other objects than sugar, for European consumption; and, 3dly, That both justice and policy require, that this country should uphold her colonies in the West Indies, settled and owned by Englishmen, instead of sacrificing them to her possessions in the East, which the want of a sufficient protecting duty on sugar, the growth of that part of the world, would completely effect.

THE END.

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ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.









THE

2

# WEST INDIA QUESTION

PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED.

*THE SECOND EDITION.*

LONDON.

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

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MDCCCXXVI.

LONDON :  
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It is of extreme importance that, prior to the introduction into Parliament, in the course of the present Session, of any measures connected with what may be called the " West India Question," the actual position of that Question should be accurately examined and understood in all its points and bearings.

In order that this examination may be made with effect, it will be necessary shortly to advert to the period when the consummation of the efforts of those benevolent men who pressed on, with unwearied zeal, to effect the abolition of the British Slave Trade, was finally accomplished in the year 1807.

A perusal of the Speeches of those Members of both Houses of Parliament who enforced the policy and necessity of the abolition of the Slave Trade, will clearly demonstrate that they anticipated from that abolition, effects different from

those which have actually occurred. They contemplated the average maintenance of the price of sugar, the main commodity of the West Indies, as compared with its price at the period when the abolition took place; and they reasoned (and reasoned most correctly on that hypothesis) to this effect: If importation be stopped, and if the demand for sugar increase progressively, the Slaves will become so valuable to the West Indian Proprietors, that, as far as their physical interest is concerned, they will be materially benefited; the Masters will feel the absolute necessity of promoting the increase of their Slaves; the consequence will be a rapid addition to the number of Creoles, and a diminution of any labours now imposed upon them, which can in any way impede the birth of children; and the most efficient means whereby Slave population can be increased, will be the institution of marriage and the cessation of that promiscuous intercourse which now universally prevails among the Negroes. The interest of the Planters themselves will combine with circumstances to produce that state of things in which transitions have been made from Slavery to Freedom in other parts of the world. Slavery will merge into a sort of caste. The *villeins en gros*, the *villeins regardant*, and the copyhold Bondsmen of our early history, will find their analogies in the transitions which will take place in the West Indies,—until at last this most de-



sirable object, the termination of Slavery as a state, will be effected by a combination of those progressive causes which will arise out of the very nature of things. Any person who will read the history of the discussions of that period must concur in the opinion, that such were the views of the Abolitionists of that day: nor is there any reason to suppose that they are in any degree prepared to deny that these views were at that time entertained by them. It will now be necessary to examine how far the circumstances which have actually taken place correspond with those which were thus anticipated.

The acquisition of the Dutch Colonies, whose land is by far the most fertile of that of all our Transatlantic Sugar Colonies, with the exception of Trinidad, furnished such an increase of the supply of Sugar as necessarily lowered its price. The effect of that lowering of the price, it is unnecessary to observe, was to diminish the profits of the West India Planters, more or less, in proportion to the fertility or barrenness of their land. But, as the excess of production of British Sugar could always find a vent in the markets of the world, if causes had not conspired to increase the quantity of Sugar flowing into those markets, the excess of the supply from the Dutch Colonies would have found a vent in the foreign market, and the diminution of price, which has actually occurred, would not have taken place to the same

extent. But the European market began to be fed from sources which ought to have been distinctly contemplated by the Abolitionists of that day; who had executed, it is true, their solemn purpose, but had executed it with that imperfection which is more or less incident to all human efforts. France was in the zenith of her glory, and the expectation must have been faint and improbable that she would consent, at the accomplishment of any pacification of Europe, to abandon the Slave Trade, a fertile source of her wealth and power, and against the continuance of which no degree of public opinion operated, as in our own country, with slow and progressive effect. To say nothing of America, Holland and Spain were at the beck of France, and Portugal, a weak though willing ally of Great Britain, might be compelled to adopt the interest of France, not, perhaps, on this point, foreign to her own. During the war, the activity of British cruisers might be sufficient to check the continuance of the Slave Trade; but, since the period of its termination, the European market has been fed by the effects of a Slave-trade immeasurably more active, more intense, and more destructive, than any which had previously existed,—one which has concentrated in itself the activity, the intensity, and the destruction, which would have been spread over the Slave Trade of the world, if that of Great Britain had not been entirely abo-

lished, and that of other nations partially abolished under her influence. The abolition of the Slave Trade on the part of Great Britain, the most honourable and praiseworthy act in her legislation (which, on other accounts, may claim comparison with the legislation of any country in the world), operated as an encouragement to the foreign Slave Trade, both in its licensed and unlicensed character. The licensed Slave Trade was carried on with an activity having reference to the period of its termination. The unlicensed Slave Trade was carried on with an activity proportioned to the profits produced by the importation of new Slaves.

The Abolitionists of 1807, confident of the results that would spring from the abolition of the Slave Trade in our West Indian possessions, never hesitated for one moment to admit the true and irrefragable principle, that it was contrary to human nature, and unattainable by any combination of human laws, to emancipate Slaves even with advantage to themselves, much less without ruin to their Masters, except by the intervention of slow and progressive transitions. It would almost appear that that part of the body of Abolitionists of the present day, who were the leaders of the body of Abolitionists of 1807, are so impatient at the nonfulfilment of their prophecies, that they are prepared to sacrifice the principles which accompanied them.

A pamphlet has recently appeared, from the pen of Mr. Stephen, entitled, "England enslaved by her own Slave Colonies." It is proposed, in the following pages, to examine the principles and opinions expressed in that pamphlet, as far as they be found to bear upon "the West India Question," and on those measures which have been carried into effect in consequence of the Resolutions of the House of Commons in May, 1823.

The main object of Mr. Stephen's publication is, to call on the Public to strengthen the Government in one sense, and to force them in another, with respect to the practical measures to be carried into effect in those West Indian Colonies, having Legislatures, which shall refuse to adopt the system of meliorating measures developed in the Order in Council for Trinidad. In page 81, Mr. Stephen addresses the following advice to the Electors of the United Kingdom, with respect to the pledges to be demanded from Candidates. "Whoever the Candidate may be, demand of him, as the condition of your support, that he will solemnly pledge himself to attend in his place, whenever any measure is brought forward for the mitigation and progressive termination of Slavery by Parliamentary enactments; and that he will give his vote for every measure of that kind, not inconsistent *with the temperate and prudent spirit of the Resolutions of May 1823,*



“ and the recommendations of His Majesty’s Government founded on those Resolutions.” This practical recommendation of Mr. Stephen but ill accords with the general tone of reasoning which pervades his work, and with those uncompromising denunciations against the state of Slavery, whether considered politically, economically, or morally, which are to be found in every page of it. It is well known that the Resolutions moved by Mr. Canning in May 1823, were intended to bind Parliament to a more practical and temperate course of proceeding on the subject, than that which was involved in the more enthusiastic Resolution moved by Mr. Fowell Buxton. The Resolution of Mr. Buxton was precisely in keeping with the reasoning in Mr. Stephen’s pamphlet. It was as follows. “ That the State of Slavery “ is repugnant to the principles of the British “ Constitution and to the Christian Religion, and “ that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British Colonies, with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned.” It will be observed, that this Resolution contains no explanation of the phrase, “ the parties concerned ;” and the expression “ well-being,” having naturally more of a physical than of a pecuniary sense, would appear to limit it to the Slaves. The Resolutions which were proposed by Mr. Canning, assented to by Mr. Buxton

in preference to his own, and unanimously passed by the House of Commons, and by which the Government and Parliament are equally bound to abide, contemplated the interests of the Planter as strongly as they did those of the Slave. They were as follow. “ First, that it is expedient to “ adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the Slave Population “ in his Majesty’s Colonies. Second, that through “ a determined and persevering, but at the same “ time judicious and temperate enforcement of “ such measures, this House looks forward to a “ *progressive improvement* in the character of the “ Slave Population, such as may prepare them “ for a participation in those civil rights and “ privileges which are enjoyed by other classes “ of his Majesty’s subjects. Third, that this “ House is anxious for the accomplishment of this “ purpose, at the earliest period that shall be “ compatible with the well-being of the Slaves “ themselves, with the safety of the Colonies, and “ with *the fair and equitable consideration of the “ interests of private property.*”

If a sentence in the English language be susceptible of a definite explanation,—if collocation of words can convey to the human mind a clear idea, these Resolutions convey two pledges : the one, the emancipation of the Slaves at some future period ; the other, compensation to the Planters, if their pecuniary interests can be shown to have

suffered, under a “*fair and equitable consideration*” of their case.

In consequence of these Resolutions, an order, framed under the direction of the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, was passed by the King in Council, embodying the main points which had been previously agreed to, not only by his Majesty’s Government (and announced by Mr. Canning in the House of Commons), but also by many Members of the West India body in this country.

The following is an abstract of the original Trinidad Order, and a statement of the modifications which it subsequently received, under directions from the Secretary of State, as they appear from the papers printed and laid before Parliament.

*Clause 1*—confirms the Procurador <sup>Protector of Slaves.</sup> Syndic, in his Office of Protector of Slaves.

*Clause 2*—requires the Protector to keep an Office in Port of Spain.

*Clause 3.*—Protector of Slaves is to have no interest in Slaves in the Island, directly or indirectly.

*Clause 4*—authorizes the Governor to

give to the Protector of Slaves leave of absence for three months in case of illness.

*Clause 5*—authorizes the Governor, in the event of absence, &c., of the Protector, to appoint as Deputy one who would not be incompetent to be Protector according to the provisions of the Order.

*Clause 6*—declares the Protector to be a Magistrate, with the powers which are possessed by the Commandants.

*Clause 7.*—Commandants of Quarters are declared to be Assistant Protectors, to execute the instructions of the Protector.

By proclamation of June, 1824, Commandants and other Officers and Tribunals therein mentioned, are authorized within their respective jurisdictions, and the Procurador Syndic, in all cases, to hear and determine complaints of Slaves.

*Clause 8.*—Notice of all prosecutions of Slaves for capital offences, or of suits



wherein the right of any alleged Slave to freedom may be the question, &c., is required to be given to the Protector, who is to attend the trial, &c.

*Clause 9*—confirms the Ordinance of 16th Nov. 1823, limiting Sunday Markets to ten o'clock in the morning, until the Governor should be instructed to issue a proclamation for the total abolition.

Sunday  
Markets.

*Clause 10.*—Persons working Slaves, or procuring them to work for their Master's benefit, between sunset on Saturday and sunrise on Monday, are to be fined not exceeding fifty nor less than five dollars—this not to extend to domestic service, or to the preservation of cattle upon the plantation.

Sunday  
Labour.

By proclamation of October, 1824, this is not to be construed to authorize a Slave to hire himself to work, either to his Owner or any other person within these hours, except for the preservation of the crops. Slaves may be employed for hire, with their own consent, provided they are so hired by their owner,

or by others with the consent of the owner in writing. The rate of wages, below which it is declared illegal to hire Slaves between these hours, is to be fixed and notified to the public by the Protector. It is further directed, that the exemption from labour between these hours, is not to extend to the cases of watchmen, nurses, and persons concerned in the interment of the dead, or in extinguishing any fire, or otherwise preventing irreparable damage or injury to the property of her or his owner. And the proclamation farther limits what is to be considered as “*preventing irreparable injury*” &c., beyond which the service of the Slave must be voluntary, and paid for.

Carrying the  
Whip in  
the Field, &c.

*Clause 11.*—To carry the whip into the field, or to use it for the purpose of coercing Slaves to labour, or to carry it elsewhere as an emblem of authority, is declared illegal.

Flogging  
Males.

*Clause 12.*—Male Slaves are not to be flogged beyond twenty-five stripes, or unless their persons be free from lacera-

tion, or until twenty-four hours have elapsed from the commission of the offence, or unless a free person be present besides him who inflicts the punishment. This not to extend to punishments inflicted on males by virtue of a judgment of any Court.

By proclamation of June, 1824, all punishments, which by it are authorized to be inflicted upon Female Slaves, may also be inflicted upon Males. (Vide next clause.)

Flogging  
Females.

*Clause 13*—abolishes Female Flogging. Females committing offences, which were heretofore punishable by flogging, to be subject to such punishments as would be sanctioned by a proclamation intended to be issued in the Island.

By proclamation of June, 1824, Female Slaves may be punished by their owners by solitary confinement, with or without work, not exceeding three days; by stocks for the hand, during the hours of labour, not exceeding thirty minutes; by house-stocks, for the hands or feet, during the day, not exceeding six hours;

Female  
Punishments.

by bed-stocks for the feet, during the night ; by handcuffs, distinguishing dresses, with or without stocks ; by distinguishing marks, to be suspended from the neck, with or without stocks ; by confinement, either solitary or otherwise, during one of the hours of noon, with or without task-work. But in all cases of confinement beyond twelve hours, a sufficiency of food is to be supplied. It further declares, that offences requiring higher punishment are to be referred to certain Magistrates and tribunals therein mentioned, who are empowered either to extend the punishments already authorized, or inflict others.

By proclamation of October, 1824,  
Female Children (Slaves), under  
ten years, may be whipped as Children of free condition.

Record of  
Punishments.

*Clause 14*—directs that a plantation record book be kept of all punishments of Female Slaves, and of all punishments of Males by flogging, exceeding three stripes.



By proclamation of October, 1824, entry need not be made of any punishment inflicted upon Female Slaves, other than such punishments as are authorized by proclamation of June, 1824, to be substituted for flogging.

*Clause 15*—states the penalties to be incurred for an omission to make the necessary entries of punishments, or for making erasures, &c., in the record.

*Clause 16*—directs transcripts of the records to be produced and sworn to at stated periods before the commandants.

*Clause 17.*—Commandants to give notice to the public, of the time and place when and where they will receive the returns.

*Clause 18*—declares the penalty for refusing to make returns, &c., to be a fine not exceeding 100*l.* nor less than 10*l.*

*Clause 19.*—Commandants directed to transmit their returns to the Protector, within fourteen days after they are completed.

*Clause 20.*—The Protector is to keep records of such returns.

Illegal  
Punishment.

*Clause 21.*—declares that upon the prosecution of the Master for an illegal punishment, if the Slave shall exhibit to the Court marks of recent laceration, and declare it to be the consequence of illegal punishment, and make a particular statement of all the circumstances, then the *onus probandi* shall lie upon the master to show, either that he did not inflict the alleged punishment, or that it was a lawful one according to the provisions of the order. It further requires the Protector to conduct every such prosecution.

Marriages of  
Slaves.

*Clause 22.*—provides for the intermarriage of Slaves, and declares such marriage to be binding in law to all intents and purposes, whether celebrated by a Clergyman of the Established Church, a Roman Catholic Priest, or a Dissenting Minister.

Non-separation  
of Families.

*Clause 23.*—declares the separation of families by judicial sale illegal.

Right of  
Slaves to Property.

*Clause 24.*—Slaves declared to be

competent to acquire and hold, &c., property in lands, within the island, or money, cattle, implements of husbandry, household furniture, and other effects of the like nature, and to bring an action in respect of the same, as if free.

*Clause 25*—directs the establishment <sup>Savings Banks,</sup> of Savings Banks, and empowers the Slave, upon making his deposits, to make a declaration, which is to have the force of a will, of the disposition to be made of them in the event of his death.

*Clause 26*—declares the Protector to be the Inspector of Savings Banks, and authorizes the Governor to appoint its officers, and make regulations for their government.

*Clause 27*—directs that a tender by a Slave of more than twenty dollars in any one week be not received, without the consent of the owner in writing being produced ; but if such consent be refused, without sufficient cause, the Protector may require the Manager of the Bank to receive the deposit.

*Clause 28*—abolishes Fees on Manu- Manumissions

missions, except twenty shillings to the Registrar, to be paid by the Protector.

*Clause 29—32.*—Any Slave desirous of purchasing his or her own freedom, or that of his or her wife; husband, child, brother, or sister, or reputed wife, &c., is empowered to do so; and if the owner be unwilling or unable, from mortgages or minority, &c. &c., to grant the manumission; or if the owner demand a greater sum than is the value of the Slave, then the chief judge shall summon the parties before him; and if the owner shall refuse or be unable to effect such manumission, then one appraiser shall be appointed by the owner, and another by the Protector, and an umpire by the chief judge, who shall \* value the Slave; and on the payment of the appraised value into the treasury, the Slave shall be manumitted. Such value to remain in the treasury, to abide the claim of the party lawfully entitled to the Slave.

*Clause 33*—requires the owner, in cases

\* By proclamation of October, 1824, the expense of appraisement to be borne equally by master and Slave.



of manumission by private contract, to give notice of the same to the Protector, whose duty it is to ascertain that the owner has a good title in law, to prepare the deed of manumission, and to have it duly enrolled.

*Clause 34.*—In cases of voluntary manumissions of Slaves under six years of age or above fifty, or labouring under disease, the owner is required to enter into a bond, in a penalty of 200*l.* for the proper maintenance, &c., of such Slave, until the age of fourteen in the case of infants, and during his or her natural life in the case of adults above fifty, or diseased Slaves.

*Clause 35.*—Clergymen and Ministers Evidence.  
are authorized to give to Slaves certificates of their understanding the nature of an oath, which certificates are to be kept on record by the Protector.

*Clause 36.*—Such certificates declared sufficient to render Slaves competent witnesses in any Civil or Criminal Court, except where the master is concerned, or in trials affecting the life of a white man.

Salary of Protector.

*Clause 37.*—The Salary of the Protector is declared to be in lieu of all fees.

Protector, Returns required from.

*Clause 38*—directs the Protector to make to the Governor the returns, &c., therein mentioned, relating to the duties of his office, &c.

Protector, Returns of.

*Clause 39.*—Protector or Commandant making any interlineations, &c., in the returns required to be made as hereinbefore mentioned, declared guilty of a misdemeanour, and to be punished as hereinafter directed.

Oath.

*Clause 40.*—Affirmation of a Quaker to be admitted in lieu of any oath required by this order.

Penalties.

*Clause 41*—subjects any free person convicted of a misdemeanour under the order, to a fine of not less than 50*l.* or more than 500*l.*, or to imprisonment for not less than one, or more than six months, or to both fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the Court convicting him: and if the conviction be for cruelty to a Slave, the Court may declare the property in such Slave to be forfeited to the King. All fines to be di-

vided between the King and prosecutor in equal moieties.

*Clause 42*—directs, that if any one shall be twice convicted of inflicting upon any Slave any cruel or unlawful punishment, he shall be declared incompetent to be an owner, &c., and his Slaves shall be forfeited to the King.

By proclamation of October, 1824.— Penalties.

Such forfeitures are not to be carried into effect before reference is made of the circumstances to His Majesty.

Mr. Stephen strongly protests against this Order in Council, and says that it is an order with which he, as an Abolitionist, is not satisfied. It will be for Parliament to consider whether this order has not, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Stephen, laid the most salutary and effectual grounds for that “*progressive improvement in the character of the Slave Population, which may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of His Majesty’s subjects ;*” in other words, for ultimate freedom.

A reference has already been made to the views entertained by the Abolitionists of 1807, with respect to the mode in which their ultimate object,

the emancipation of the Slaves, could be safely attained. To show that Mr. Stephen himself, even at a later period, entertained opinions on this subject inconsistent with those which have induced him to pronounce a censure on the Order in Council for Trinidad, it is only necessary to refer to a pamphlet written by him in the year 1815, in support of the measure of a General Registry. In that pamphlet, he defends the Abolitionists from the charge of having denied, during the discussions which terminated in the abolition of the Slave Trade, a desire to effect the ultimate emancipation of the Slaves; and he states explicitly the views which were entertained by the Abolitionists with reference to that object. In contrasting the sentiments avowed by Mr. Stephen in that pamphlet with the tone which he now adopts, it is not intended to imply that he is to be reproached for having changed his opinions (which it is open to any man to do at any time, provided that he can show just cause for such change), but to show, on the one hand, that his former opinions were more correct than those which he at present entertains; and, on the other, to invite him to a more temperate degree of feeling towards those persons who differ from him, though not more widely than he now does from his former self. The following is an extract from the pamphlet to which reference has been made\* :—

\* Reasons for a General Registry, p. 8.



“ Accused by their opponents of meditating a  
 “ general emancipation, they denied the charge;  
 “ but it was denied only in the insidious meaning  
 “ of the imputation itself. They did not aim at  
 “ an emancipation to be effected by insurrection  
 “ in the West Indies, or to be ordained pre-  
 “ cipitately by positive law; but they by no  
 “ means denied, and scrupled not to avow, that  
 “ they did look forward to an extinction of slavery  
 “ in the Colonies, to be accomplished by the same  
 “ happy means which formerly put an end to it in  
 “ England; viz., by a benign, though insensible  
 “ revolution in opinions and manners; by the  
 “ encouragement of particular manumissions, and  
 “ the *progressive melioration of the condition of*  
 “ *the Slaves, till it should glide insensibly into general*  
 “ *freedom.* They looked, in short, to an eman-  
 “ cipation, of which not the the Slaves, but *the*  
 “ *Masters, should be the willing instruments or*  
 “ *authors.*”

To suppose that the Abolitionists of 1807 aban-  
 doned all contemplation of the ultimate eman-  
 cipation of the Slaves, is, to advance a pro-  
 position so contrary to common sense, and so  
 refuted by passages which may be quoted from  
 their speeches and publications, that it would  
 be a waste of time to press such a proposition.  
 They ought to have contemplated that object,  
 and they did contemplate it; but it was as the  
 result of a series of progressive changes, such as

is so well described in the preceding passage quoted from Mr. Stephen; and the Order in Council for Trinidad, with which Mr. Stephen is so dissatisfied, appears to realize, as far as legislation can operate, the accomplishment of a transition from slavery to freedom, by the very means contemplated by Mr. Stephen himself; with this important exception, that the clause which has been called, (perhaps incorrectly), the compulsory manumission clause, was not contemplated by Mr. Stephen, as a part of any system which was to supersede a state of slavery by a state of freedom. The opinions of the Abolitionists of 1807 were unanimous, that emancipation could not profitably take place *until the Slaves had been prepared for its reception by an improvement of their character, growing out of an amelioration of their condition*, and involving necessarily a change of treatment which would approximate them to the state of free persons. Now, if reference be made to page 90 of Mr. Stephen's last pamphlet, the following passage will be found:—

“Dismiss the idle hope that Slavery will ever  
 “be abolished, or materially alleviated, by the  
 “will of the Masters, or by the laws of West  
 “Indian Legislators. The often repeated, and  
 “often refuted, pretence of actual improvement,  
 “believe me, is all delusion. The worst and  
 “most destructive branches of this oppression  
 “(excess of labour, enforced by brutal means

“and insufficiency of sustenance,) *are as prevalent as ever*, and must be so from the necessary effects of the system, till controlled by parliamentary authority. I affirm it as a man who certainly knows the case; and who is preparing to adduce such evidence of its true nature as will satisfy the most incredulous.”

By Mr. Stephen's own showing, therefore, emancipation would be dangerous, if accomplished in a more rapid manner than that which is involved in the regulations of the Trinidad Order; regulations, to protest against which there has been a strong disposition throughout the West Indies, and which Mr. Stephen now holds up to the contempt of the Abolitionists, as incompetent to fulfil the purposes of Parliament.

But, not to rest this part of the subject upon the opinions of Mr. Stephen alone, it will be necessary to select from the speeches and writings of the Abolitionists, some of the most remarkable passages expressive of their sentiments with respect to the emancipation of the Slaves. In a special Report which the Directors of the African Institution published in 1815, in answer to a pamphlet of Mr. Thorpe, is the following passage:—  
 “Mr. Thorpe quotes a passage from the Letter to Prince Talleyrand, and, with his usual boldness of misrepresentation, gives it as an avowal that it is not slavery, but the Slave Trade, that Mr. Wilberforce dislikes. This interpretation is

“ put upon a passage in which that gentleman  
 “ labours to clear up the mistake, still prevalent  
 “ on the continent, of confounding the Abolition  
 “ of the Slave Trade with the immediate eman-  
 “ cipation of the Slaves in the Colonies. Mr.  
 “ Wilberforce, in common with all the most dis-  
 “ tinguished advocates of the Abolition, is anxious  
 “ to show, that a mere cessation of the importa-  
 “ tion of Slaves cannot occasion those *dangers*  
 “ *which might justly be apprehended from the sudden*  
 “ *emancipation of men, most of whom must be desti-*  
 “ *tute of those habits which are necessary for enabling*  
 “ *them to act with propriety as freemen:* and from  
 “ this argument, Mr. Thorpe, with a remarkable  
 “ disregard of candour, draws the conclusion, that  
 “ Mr. Wilberforce does not look on the conti-  
 “ nuance of slavery as an evil deserving of any  
 “ attention.

“ It is well known that the friends of abolition  
 “ are the less inclined to recommend any hasty  
 “ or violent measures for emancipation, because  
 “ they are convinced that if new importations of  
 “ Slaves be *completely and effectually* prevented,  
 “ *this of itself must produce a material and progres-*  
 “ *sive improvement in the condition of those already in*  
 “ *the colonies, so as to lead in time to their emanci-*  
 “ *pation.* Through a similar progress, the pea-  
 “ santry of our own country and of the greater  
 “ part of Europe have risen from the condition  
 “ of serfs to that of free labourers, by means



“ of a number of indulgences granted from time  
 “ to time by the masters themselves, merely  
 “ from a regard to their own interest. Expe-  
 “ rience taught them that it was better policy to  
 “ bribe their Slaves to be industrious, than to at-  
 “ tempt compulsion ; and from this motive, one  
 “ privilege has been conferred after another, till,  
 “ in the end, all that distinguished the condition  
 “ of a Slave has been annihilated. The same  
 “ causes will produce the same effects in the  
 “ West Indies as in Europe ; and however slow  
 “ this progress may be supposed to be, history  
 “ demonstrates that it is sure and invariable ; for  
 “ along with the advancement of civilization, do-  
 “ mestic slavery has disappeared in every country  
 “ where it has not been kept alive either by the  
 “ practice of enslaving prisoners taken in war, or  
 “ by the importation of Slaves from countries  
 “ where that practice subsists. These views have  
 “ been so often explained to the public, that no  
 “ man of common information and of a decent re-  
 “ gard to truth, could have represented them as  
 “ implying indifference to the continuance of  
 “ Negro Slavery.”

The language used in Parliament by Mr. Wil-  
 berforce and the other leading Abolitionists, dur-  
 ing the nineteen years of discussion which pre-  
 ceded the Abolition of the Slave Trade, will be  
 found to accord with that of the African Institu-  
 tion in 1815, which has just been quoted.

On the 18th of April, 1791, Mr. Wilberforce used the following train of reasoning, in opposition to the argument, that an immediate Abolition of the Slave Trade, by displeasing the colonial legislatures, would prevent the enactment of laws for the protection of the Slaves, and thereby retard the melioration of their condition:—" But, " he must repeat it, this plan of amending the " situation of the Slaves, and securing their good " treatment by laws, was not inefficacious only, " but unsafe. He entered his protest against the " fatal consequences which might result from it ; " and called on those who were most imme- " diately interested in the question, to lend " their serious attention to his argument. The " Negroes were creatures like ourselves; they " had the same feelings, and even stronger affec- " tions than our own: but their minds were un- " informed, and their moral characters were " altogether debased. Men in this state were " almost incapacitated for the enjoyment of civil " rights. In order to become fit for the enjoy- " ment of these, they must in some measure be " restored to that level from which they had been " so unjustly and cruelly degraded. To give " them a power of appealing to the laws, would " be to awaken in them a sense of the dignity of " their nature. The first return of life, after a " swoon, was commonly a convulsion, dangerous " at once to the party and to all around him.

“ Such, in the case of the Slaves, he feared might  
 “ be the consequence of a sudden communica-  
 “ tion of the consciousness of civil rights. This  
 “ was a feeling it would be dangerous to impart,  
 “ till you should release them from such humili-  
 “ ating and ignominious distinctions, as with  
 “ that consciousness they would not endure. You  
 “ must conduct them to the situation, having first  
 “ prepared them for it, and not bring the situa-  
 “ tion to them. To be under the protection of  
 “ laws was, in fact, to be a freeman; and to  
 “ unite slavery and freedom in one condition,  
 “ was a vain attempt; they were, in fact, incom-  
 “ patible, and could never coalesce. With this  
 “ system, which he thus condemned, he wished  
 “ to contrast *the Abolition*, which was *exactly such*  
 “ *an agent*, if he might so express himself, *as the*  
 “ *nature of the case required*. All hopes of supplies  
 “ from the coast being cut off, *breeding would hence-*  
 “ *forth become a general object of attention, the effects*  
 “ *of which would not be confined merely to those*  
 “ *greater articles of better feeding and milder dis-*  
 “ *cipline, but would extend to innumerable other par-*  
 “ *ticulars, which an act of Assembly could neither*  
 “ *specify nor enforce.*”

On the 2d of April, 1792, we find the following  
 passages in a speech of the same gentleman:—  
 “ After what I have said, I am not afraid of being  
 “ told I design to emancipate the Slaves. I will

“ not, indeed, deny that I wish to impart to them  
 “ the blessings of freedom. Who is there that  
 “ knows their value, but must join with me in  
 “ this desire? But the freedom I mean, is that  
 “ of which, at present, they, alas! are not capable.  
 “ True liberty is the child of reason and of order;  
 “ it is, indeed, a plant of celestial growth, but the  
 “ soil must be prepared for its reception; he that  
 “ would see it flourish and bring forth its proper  
 “ fruits, must not think it sufficient to let it shoot  
 “ as it will in unconstrained licentiousness.

“ *Luxuriantia compescet, nimis aspera sano*  
*Lævabit cultu, virtute carentia tollet.*

“ Would you, then, impart to them these in-  
 “ estimable benefits,—take away that cause which  
 “ at present obstructs their introduction.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ I frankly acknowledge that the consideration  
 “ of the planter’s benefit, from stopping the im-  
 “ portations, does not interest me, in any degree,  
 “ so much as that to be thence derived by the un-  
 “ happy Slaves. Losing, by degrees, the painful  
 “ recollection of their native and early connexions,  
 “ conceiving new attachments to their dwelling-  
 “ places, to their families, to their masters, they  
 “ would gradually rise in the scale of beings; no  
 “ longer ready every moment to start into insur-  
 “ rections, they would cease to be the continual  
 “ objects of the planter’s jealousy and suspicion;



“ it would be no longer necessary for the general  
 “ safety to extinguish in them the principle of  
 “ moral agency ; they would feel more respectable  
 “ in themselves, and be more respected by  
 “ others, *and, by degrees, the harshness of their*  
 “ *present bondage being transformed into the mildness*  
 “ *of patriarchal servitude, they would become capable*  
 “ *of still greater blessings and more ennobling privi-*  
 “ *leges.*”

On the 11th of April, 1796, Sir Philip (then Mr.) Francis, in proposing a Bill “for the Regulation and Improvement of the Condition of the Slaves in the West Indies,” (which was supported by some of the Abolitionists, but opposed by others, as being incapable of producing its intended effect without a total Abolition of the Slave Trade,) said—“ Instead of bad Slaves, I would make the Negroes good servants. I am sure that the master’s profit, on the whole, would grow with the freedom, and that even his morals would be mended by it. A good master makes a good servant, and *vice versâ*. But we are yet at too great a distance from this humble state of improvement. I do not aim at it immediately. Then what is it you propose ? I mean, Sir, generally, in the first instance, to allow the Negroes every benefit and advantage compatible with a rational and profitable demand on their service ; to mend their actual condition, to *prepare them gradually* for a better situation,

“ and to *make them capable* of higher improvements.”

On the 3d of July, 1804, the Bishop of St. Asaph gave the following explanation, in answer to an observation that the immediate emancipation of the Slaves was understood to be the object of the friends of the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade:—“ He had been much misconceived, if “ it was thought that he had any view to farther “ consequences than the Abolition of the Slave “ Trade. He took that opportunity of declaring “ that, in his opinion, that event would gradually “ produce all the amelioration in the state and “ condition of African Slaves that was practicable, “ or, indeed, desirable, and that he looked to no “ farther consequences whatever.”

On the 30th of May, 1804, Mr. Wilberforce stated, that “ after the question of Abolition was “ disposed of, *any subsequent measures must be left “ with the Colonial Assemblies themselves, and with “ them it would rest how far the condition of the “ Negroes was capable of greater improvement. It “ was not fair in those who opposed the Abolition, “ to confound it with the question of emancipation, with which, in the first instance, it has no “ immediate connexion.*”——In the same debate, he observed, “ Let the Abolition once take “ place ; let it be established that there shall be “ no other mode of keeping up the number of “ Negroes but by encouraging their increase in

“ the respective islands, and then the masters  
 “ must feel an interest of the strongest kind to  
 “ encourage their protection and support. No-  
 “ thing short of this could correct the evils and  
 “ remove the miseries connected with the system  
 “ as it now existed.”

On the 28th of February, 1805, Mr. Wilberforce  
 said, “ He had endeavoured, on various former  
 “ occasions, to impress upon the House, the ad-  
 “ vantages likely to result from changing this  
 “ system, by showing that the Abolition of the  
 “ Slave Trade from the coast of Africa would have  
 “ many very beneficial effects. It would make  
 “ it the obvious interest of the master that the  
 “ Slave should be kept with as much care as pos-  
 “ sible, because his place could not be supplied ;  
 “ after this, means would, of course, be adopted to  
 “ take care of the health of every Negro, and also  
 “ of his moral improvement ; encouragement  
 “ would be given to marriage, and other legiti-  
 “ mate objects would be pursued, by which they  
 “ would become populous, industrious, intelligent,  
 “ moral, and happy ; by which we should have a  
 “ powerful, though laborious and obedient pea-  
 “ santry, instead of a degraded race of beings,  
 “ actuated only by brutal impulse.” \* \* \*  
 “ And here he did not wish to avoid that part of  
 “ the subject on which the opponents of the Abo-  
 “ lition dwelt so much, he meant the eventual  
 “ emancipation of the Negroes in the West Indies.

“ He had never concealed that his hope was, that  
 “ such might be the ultimate effect of the abolition  
 “ of the African importation, *but that was a period,*  
 “ *the distance of which he had never attempted to cal-*  
 “ *culate,* although his opponents had charged him  
 “ with having it immediately in view. Had that  
 “ been his object, or even his hope, he should not  
 “ deserve the word ‘ humane’ to be added to his  
 “ views, but a shorter one, and that was the word  
 “ ‘ mad,’ ought to be applied to his object. But  
 “ although he felt that the immediate emancipa-  
 “ tion of the Negroes in the West Indies could not  
 “ be expected, for that before they could be fit  
 “ to receive freedom, it would be madness to  
 “ attempt to give it to them, yet he owned he  
 “ looked forward, and so, he hoped, did many  
 “ others, to the time when the Negroes in the  
 “ West Indies should have the full enjoyment of a  
 “ free, moral, industrious, and happy peasantry.”

On the 10th of June, 1806, Mr. Fox (alluding to  
 the increase of the Black population in North  
 America, since the Abolition of the Slave Trade)  
 said, “ As that is the part of the world where po-  
 “ pulation proceeds more rapidly than in any  
 “ other, and as we know that within the last  
 “ twenty years the population of Whites has  
 “ doubled, and that of Negroes very nearly so,  
 “ without importation, it affords, I will not say a  
 “ damning, but a blessing proof, that our adopting  
 “ a similar course would ultimately produce the



“ happy effect of a *gradual emancipation*, of increasing population, of enabling Negroes to acquire property as the reward of long servitude, and thus place these islands in a state of safety beyond any thing that could be done by fleets or armies.”

In the same debate, the present Marquis of Lansdowne (then Lord H. Petty) said, “ The Right Hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, in referring to what I said, has misunderstood me. He says that I spoke of free labour, and from thence not only drew a conclusion in favour of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, but also for the emancipation of the Negroes. Now, Sir, if he means that I am of opinion that the immediate Abolition of the Slave Trade should be accompanied by a proclamation, granting immediate freedom to the Slaves in the West Indies, I can assure him I have no such wild, irrational, or impracticable idea. But if he means that I look to the Abolition of the Slave Trade as likely ultimately to produce emancipation, I certainly do conceive it possible, by amending the situation of the Slaves, and by the *progressive improvement of their minds, moral character, and habits, as far as they are capable of improvement in such a state, that they should pass from slavery to free labour, as they become fit for it. In that sense, and in that sense only, I look for the emancipation of the Negroes.*”

The following remarks were made by Mr. Barham, in the same debate, and, together with those of Lord H. Petty, were alluded to by Mr. W. Smith, as expressing correctly the views of the Abolitionists: “As to the Slaves obtaining the condition of free labourers, I am not one of those who deprecate the Abolition of the Slave Trade on a prospect of any evils arising from that condition of free labour which may be the result of it. That, however, is a state of things not to be brought forward by any act of Parliament here, but *preparation must be made for it by rendering the Slaves fit for freedom, and that must be accomplished gradually, by granting them, from time to time, as much freedom as they can bear, until they all become fit for it; but they should not have it sooner.*”

Mr. Wm. Smith. “I do hope, Sir, that after this night we shall hear no more of that silly calumny, that we are aiming at the immediate emancipation of the Slaves in the West Indies, which, for the last eighteen years, has been regularly fastened upon us every time the Abolition of the Slave Trade has been proposed, and as repeatedly denied by us, but which, with an inflexible unfairness (not to call it by any other name) has still continued to be imputed to us. It has been repeatedly stated by us, that the emancipation of the Negroes in the West Indies, makes no part of the object we

“ have in view in the Abolition of the African  
 “ Slave Trade, *in any other sense than that which*  
 “ *has been so well explained by the Noble Lord (Lord*  
 “ *H. Petty) and another gentleman, whom I am*  
 “ *happy to call my friend,* and I do hope that we  
 “ shall escape the repetition of this calumny.”

In the same debate, Mr. Fox said, “ But here  
 “ it is necessary for me to observe, that some  
 “ gentlemen have unaccountably misconceived  
 “ my meaning on the subject of slavery in the  
 “ West Indies. Some have conceived an opinion  
 “ that I had said something in favour of the eman-  
 “ cipation of the Slaves there. I certainly said  
 “ nothing for that emancipation, neither did I say  
 “ any thing against it, but now I will add a word  
 “ to that part of the subject.” [Mr. Fox pro-  
 ceeded to argue that, with proper treatment, the  
 Negroes would so multiply, that their number  
 would be greater than would be required for the  
 cultivation of the islands ; and those who were  
 not wanted might be safely emancipated and sent  
 elsewhere. He then repeated that the Abolition  
 of the Slave Trade and the emancipation of the  
 Slaves were two points totally distinct ; and he  
 remarked that, if the Abolition of the Slave Trade  
 could not be accomplished without the consent of  
 the planters, there was ample proof that it would  
 never be accomplished at all.] “ But with re-  
 “ gard to emancipation, I perfectly agree in what  
 “ has been said, that the idea of *an Act of Par-*

“ *liament to emancipate the Slaves in the West Indies,*  
 “ WITHOUT THE CONSENT AND CONCURRENT FEEL-  
 “ ING OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, BOTH IN THIS  
 “ COUNTRY AND IN THAT, would not only be mis-  
 “ chievous in its consequences, but totally extra-  
 “ vagant in its conception, as well as impracti-  
 “ cable in its execution, and therefore I see no  
 “ good in discussing that point. The Abolition  
 “ of the African Slave Trade is what I hope will  
 “ soon be accomplished; but the emancipation  
 “ of Slaves, or the end of slavery in the West  
 “ Indies, is what I cannot hope to see. But if I  
 “ were sure it would never have that effect, I  
 “ should not be the less zealous in the cause in  
 “ which I am engaged, because the Abolition of  
 “ the African Slave Trade would be the accom-  
 “ plishment of a great and good work, even if it  
 “ should never be followed by the Abolition of  
 “ slavery in the West Indies.”

10th Feb. 1807. Lord Grenville was “glad to  
 “ find that the opponents of the measure were  
 “ nearly reduced to one argument, and that was  
 “ that the Bill did not extend to the emancipation  
 “ of the Slaves already on the islands. The at-  
 “ tempted application, however, of the same jus-  
 “ tice and humanity to both cases, resolved itself  
 “ into this. In abolishing the Trade, we did jus-  
 “ tice to the inhabitants of Africa, who were the  
 “ parties aggrieved; but in giving liberty to the  
 “ Slaves on the islands, we should do the greatest



“ *injustice to them, in giving them that which they*  
 “ *would not know how to use, and which would*  
 “ *only be productive to them of injury. That*  
 “ *liberty, the blessings of which we were enabled*  
 “ *properly to estimate and appreciate, would be to*  
 “ *them, in their state of ignorance and barbarism, a*  
 “ *poison of the most baleful nature.*”

On the 23d of Feb. 1807, Lord Grey (then Lord Howick) said, “ We have been told that if this  
 “ be considered as a measure of justice, we do  
 “ not follow up our own principles, for if slavery  
 “ be in itself unjust, we ought to abolish it alto-  
 “ gether. I think it sufficient to say, that the  
 “ result of this measure will, I trust, lead to the  
 “ Abolition of Slavery, encouraged and assisted by  
 “ such regulations as the wisdom of Parliament  
 “ may afterwards think fit to adopt. I trust that  
 “ by this measure *slavery will gradually wear out,*  
 “ *without the immediate intervention of any positive*  
 “ *law,* in like manner as took place in the states of  
 “ Greece and Rome, and some parts of modern  
 “ Europe, where Slaves have been permitted to  
 “ work out and purchase their own freedom, and  
 “ that such regulations may be adopted as have  
 “ been in some of the Spanish and Portuguese  
 “ Colonies.” [Lord H. further illustrated this by  
 reference to some parts of the United States, and  
 then observed,] “ But the Abolition of Slavery *must*  
 “ *be gradually and not suddenly effected, and this both*  
 “ *on the principles of justice to the planters, and also*

“ *to the Slaves themselves. For, in the present reduced circumstances of the Slaves, to propose their immediate emancipation, would be to produce horrors similar to those which have already happened at St. Domingo.* ”

On the 17th of March, 1807, Earl Percy moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the gradual Abolition of Slavery. His plan was, that all children born after a certain time should be declared free. Sir C. Pole said, “ that he rejoiced that this measure had been brought forward thus early, because it showed the cloven foot which had been attempted to be concealed: he believed that this was one main object in view by the Abolitionists,” &c. Mr. Wilberforce said that, had the motion proceeded from a less respectable quarter, he should have been as glad as the Hon. Baronet, that it had been made; because it would shew that he and those who thought with him made the distinction between the Abolition of the Trade and the *emancipation of the Slaves, and not only abstained from proposing the latter, but were ready to reject such a proposition when made by others.* How much soever he looked forward with anxious expectation to the period when the Negroes might with safety be liberated,—he knew too well the effect which the long continuance of abject slavery produced upon the human mind, to think of their immediate emancipation—a measure which, at

“ the present moment, would be injurious to them  
 “ and ruinous to the Colonies. He and those who  
 “ acted with him were satisfied with having  
 “ gained an object which was safely attainable ;  
 “ they had always declared, what he now re-  
 “ peated, that the sole point which they had in  
 “ view was, *the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and not*  
 “ *the emancipation of the Slaves.* *The enemies of the*  
 “ *Abolition had always confounded those two objects—*  
 “ *the friends of the Abolition had always distinguished*  
 “ *them.*”

Mr. Sheridan expressed, at some length, his approbation of Lord Percy's motion. After which

Mr. Wilberforce, in explanation, “ denied ever  
 “ having disavowed his wish that freedom should  
 “ be ultimately communicated to the Slaves. He  
 “ deprecated the discussion at present, because  
 “ he looked to the gradual improvement of their  
 “ minds, and to the diffusion among them of those  
 “ domestic charities which would render them  
 “ more fit than he feared they now were to bear  
 “ emancipation.

Mr. Wilberforce, in his “ Letter to the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of Yorkshire,” published in 1807, (pages 256 to 259) notices the charge made against the Abolitionists, of aiming at *immediate* emancipation, and also the charge of inconsistency preferred against them for *not* immediately emancipating the Slaves. He denies the former, and refutes the latter by the same

arguments which have been extracted from his speeches in the preceding pages; and he concludes thus—"It (*i. e.* liberty) is indeed a 'plant of celestial growth,' but the soil and climate must be prepared for its reception, or it will not bring forth its proper fruits. These are fruits, alas! which our poor degraded Negro Slaves are as yet incapable of enjoying. To grant it to them immediately, would be to ensure not only their master's ruin, but their own. A certain previous course of discipline is necessary. They must be trained and educated for this most perfect state of manly maturity; and, by a singular felicity of coincidence, the stoppage of all further importations from Africa, with all the consequences which it introduces in its train, is *the very shortest and safest path by which the Slaves can travel to the enjoyment of true liberty.*"

To revert, however, to the quotation made from Mr. Stephen's "Reasons for a General Registry." In that passage, it is stated how desirable it is that the masters should be the "willing instruments or authors" of the freedom of the Slaves. He now contends that the consent of the local legislatures in the Legislative Colonies is in no degree necessary or *desirable*, in carrying into effect a law to be imposed by the British Parliament; and he advances the extraordinary position that the meliorating laws should be executed by per-



sons not having any cognizance of the circumstances or habits of Slaves, in other words, by perfect strangers.

To admit that the consent of the local legislatures was *absolutely necessary*, would be to admit that Parliament had passed resolutions which it was not in its power to enforce. But to assert that their consent is not *desirable*, is to advance (to say the least) a very extraordinary proposition. Let it be supposed that an Act of Parliament should be passed, embodying the clauses of the Trinidad Order, and that Parliament should require such Act to be received as law in the West Indian Colonies. The practical opposition of the West Indians might be twofold. They might deny the right of Parliament to enact such a law, as involving the general question of internal interference; and in that case, their opposition would be directed, not against the details, but against the authority of the law. On the other hand, there might be a general indisposition to facilitate the practical execution of the law; and if that were the case, it might be difficult to devise the machinery of such a law, so as to produce those beneficial consequences for which it had been framed. In this reasoning, it is not meant to be implied that, if *permanent contumacious* resistance were to take place, it might not be necessary to interfere—whether such interference were in the character of enforcement of law, or of punishment

of contumacy. In that case, one of these alternatives, however abstractedly undesirable, might be most necessary to be adopted. But all that is contended is, that the practical difficulty incident to a forced legislation should be avoided by every effort which reason and temperance can suggest.

Let it not be supposed, however, for one moment, that it is the object of this publication, to imply that those enactments which form part of the Trinidad Order in Council *ought not* to be adopted in spirit, according to local circumstances, by the various legislatures throughout the West Indies. Its object is to shew, that *those enactments being so adopted*, all has been done which can in prudence and justice be attempted for the present. The result must be the work of time, and the impatience of benevolence must yield to the laws of nature. With respect to the mode in which the practical adoption of these measures by the Legislatures is to be compassed, it is only necessary to repeat, that every effort which reason and temperance can suggest, should precede any measures of direct authority.

But there may be still those who will contend for instantaneous and compulsory legislation, and who will enquire, Has not such legislation taken place in Trinidad? The answer is—first, that mode of legislation was the undisputed constitutional mode: it has never been pretended that the authority of any body competent to enact laws

was superseded in Trinidad by the passing of an order in Great Britain. And, secondly, the previously existing state of law in Trinidad, and the habits of the community founded upon it, did much more nearly approach to the spirit of the clauses in the Trinidad Order in Council than will be found to be the case in any other West Indian Colony.

Mr. Stephen has taken especial care, in this pamphlet, to blend together two questions which, in all practical discussions respecting the fulfilment of the Resolutions of the House of Commons in 1823, ought, in equity, to be kept distinct and separate, namely, the question of Slavery in the West Indies, and the question of the Commercial Monopoly given to the West Indian Colonies. If there were not a single Slave in the West Indies, the West Indians might protest, *ex-parte*, against any relaxation of duty, whether with respect to East Indian or to foreign sugar, on the ground that sugar cultivation in the West Indian Islands had been fostered by British Acts, upon the principle of monopoly, and that it would, therefore, be unjust to depart from that principle, unless in the most cautious and progressive manner:—such monopoly being founded on the principle that the articles produced were the result of capital and industry exclusively British, and being precisely analogous to that monopoly which exists with respect to articles of British growth.

On the other hand, the Abolitionists might argue, *ex-parte*, that it was unwise and contrary to sound principles of political economy, to maintain the West Indian monopoly any longer, and that it was clearly right to diminish the duties on East Indian and foreign sugar. It would not be inconsistent to assert that the West Indian Colonies ought not to have a monopoly, and, at the same time to contend that the planter ought not to be deprived of the services of his Slave without compensation. Indeed, if the monopoly were removed, any diminution of labour would only prejudice the planter the more, and give him a still stronger claim for compensation;—such compensation being limited to that point where necessary and humane regulation ends, and where compulsory substitution of money for labour begins.

But what remedies does Mr. Stephen propose with reference to the existence of slavery in these Colonies? His first recommendation is, to diminish the duty on East Indian sugar, which, it must be remembered, is prepared by men, if not in a state of slavery like that of the African blacks in the West Indies, yet under circumstances of unequivocal coercion, and absence of any thing like the idea which is conveyed by the term "*freedom*" to the mind of an Englishman. His second recommendation is, to admit the import of sugar raised in foreign colonies, where not only the evil of slavery as a recognised state



exists, but where that state is aggravated twenty-fold by the introduction of fresh Slaves, whether of permitted or of illicit importation. How can he reconcile it to himself to abstain from the sugar of a British plantation, on a principle of privation to himself, involving calamity to the producer of that British plantation sugar, and yet to indulge in the luxury of foreign Slave sugar, for the benefit of the foreign producer?

The following statement will justify the imputation of this intention to him. Mr. Stephen expresses himself favourably towards the new system of colonial policy, which the measures of the last Session have introduced. He confesses that he is almost a convert to that system. He says, "Let me not be understood, then, as condemning in the abstract these new principles, or the applying them, if impartially done, to our colonial trade and navigation." He then proceeds to show that their application has not been impartial, in the following passage. "Unhappily, this great commercial and maritime revolution had some awkward modifications, some striking departures from its own principles, and exceptions to its own rules; and upon every one of these, West Indian interests, and West Indian views, were so legibly written, that if the West Indian Committee had sat in council with the Board of Trade, and guided its resolutions, the new code could not have been

“ better framed for the gratification of our planters.  
 “ The general principle is the favourite maxim of  
 “ political economists, that trade should be per-  
 “ fectly free. The colonial monopoly\*, therefore,  
 “ ought clearly to have been abolished on both  
 “ sides ; but it was relaxed only where it was re-  
 “ strictive on the planter, and continued only  
 “ where it made for his advantage. He may now  
 “ sell his sugar where and to whom he pleases,  
 “ but the English consumers are still bound, as  
 “ before, to buy it. Foreigners may bring us what  
 “ they please, except any thing that West India  
 “ planters have to sell. As to protective duties,  
 “ they should no longer have a place in our Cus-  
 “ tom-house vocabularies ; the very name is here-  
 “ tical by the new faith ; for commerce can be  
 “ protected only ‘by itself.’ Ay, but our planters  
 “ were here a little sceptical, and thought that  
 “ 36s. per cwt. additional duty on sugar, and  
 “ 84s. additional duty on coffee, of foreign growth,  
 “ would be better than theoretical security  
 “ against rivalry in the British markets ; and  
 “ plain men, perhaps, will suspect that they were  
 “ right ; for they were humoured in this whim ;  
 “ and we are now paying on an average from 42s.  
 “ to 45s. per cwt. for sugar, which a year or two  
 “ ago we bought at an average of from 27s. to

\* The monopoly of the mother-country as to the supply  
 of her staple articles, may be considered as only partially  
 relaxed.

“30s.” If, therefore, the partiality of which he complains were removed, protective duties would “no longer have a place in our Custom-house vocabularies;” and, in that case, foreign sugar, grown not only by Creole, but by newly-imported Slaves, might be imported for the consumption of the English people.

Mr. Stephen adverts to the expense sustained by the mother-country for the sake of the West Indian Colonies in time of war, and to the loss of life incident to their retention. Would not eight-tenths of that expense, if not the whole, have been incurred, had these Colonies been British Colonies with a free instead of a Slave population? And was not that mortality during the war—a circumstance incident to a state of war, rather than to a state of slavery? It was the value of these Colonies which attracted the efforts of the enemy towards them; and if that value had existed in the absence of slavery, what cause would have diminished the mortality or the expense?

Mr. Stephen asserts that one of the causes of the poverty and diminishing value of the West Indian Colonies is the exhaustion of the soil, in consequence of the want of manure, which arises from the substitution of the labour of men for the labour of cattle, and he also mentions the absence of necessary implements as a cause of the increased expense of production in the West Indies. If this were the case, the first duty of

the Abolitionists would have been to publish a practical statement of the manner in which the labour of cattle could be substituted, with advantage, for the labour of Slaves, and in which the employment of implements or machinery, would have superseded or diminished the intensity of manual labour now performed. Does such a publication exist? It does not; and the reason is, that no man has been able to show the policy, in a pecuniary point of view, of making these proposed alterations. More than two years have elapsed since the Society of Arts publicly offered a premium of 50*l.* for the best essay on this subject: and does Mr. Stephen think that, if he had been enabled to supply such an essay, he would not have done more to vindicate the purposes of practical humanity, than by venting denunciations against slavery as a state,—when, whether in theory or in practice, no man will be found to defend that state, except as one which has been so far fostered and confirmed by British legislation, as to require some principle of national compensation to be applied, should injurious consequences accrue to the property of those persons whose interests are involved in its continuance? Does he really mean to maintain that the West Indians would *permanently* adhere to this accursed system of slavery, if the substitution of cattle, machinery, or implements, or the introduction of new management, could compensate to them for



the difference between the price of Slave labour and the price of free labour, producing similar, or nearly similar, results of production ?

Mr. Stephen attempts to show that a principle of favouritism, with respect to the West Indian Colonies, has long prevailed in the measures of the Government; and, as one instance in proof of this assertion, he refers to the encouragement given to the West India Company. From the mode of argument which he adopts on this point, he appears to consider that if a Planter, having, for example, two hundred Slaves, were to pay to an individual Mortgagee interest at the rate of six per cent. on a debt of 20,000*l.* coupled with the necessity of not only consigning his sugar to such Mortgagee, but also of restricting himself from the production of any other article not equally consignable, the Slaves on his estate would be in better circumstances than they would be if the West India Company gave him an opportunity of paying off his mortgage, by a fresh mortgage, at five or four per cent. In other words, Mr. Stephen would appear to argue, that the prosperity of the Slave is coincident with the adversity of the Master. This argument, indeed, is expressed by the Abolitionists in a somewhat different form. They reason thus:—We do not mean to sustain the proposition which you have ascribed to us; but we mean to say, that the poorer the Proprietor of a sugar estate becomes,—the less as-

sistance he is enabled to receive, the greater the difficulties with which he is embarrassed,—the sooner will he be obliged to give up the cultivation of sugar altogether ; and in his abandonment of sugar cultivation is involved the interest of his Slaves. But these gentlemen totally forget the misery and wretchedness to which the Slaves must be exposed, when the only chance which remains for the Master to continue that cultivation, which is his sole stake in life, is the keeping himself up to the level of average profits by overworking the Slave, whose extra labour is to supply him with the means of obtaining those profits. If the analogy of domestic agriculture be in any degree admitted, can any instance be shown in which the live-stock of a distressed farmer has been better fed and better treated, or even his labourers better paid, than those of a farmer whose industry was successful and remunerating ? The extreme Abolitionists also forget that to prohibit any class of men, for such reasons, from deriving benefit from those pecuniary facilities which belong to a great and free country, is to make a sacrifice of principle for special purposes ; to work out the accomplishment of a salutary end by unjustifiable means ; which contravenes the very essence of sound morality.

One of the most popular and plausible arguments which are employed against the West India interest, has been prudently omitted, or at least

very partially adverted to by Mr. Stephen. The argument thus passed over, is that which is drawn from the present state of Hayti\*, as a conclusive proof of the advantage, rather than the detriment, which would accrue to the West Indies from the emancipation of the Slaves. It is prominently put forward, in the Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society, published in 1824, and is probably the most inconsequent argument that can be found in any paper gravely submitted for the information of the public. This Report alludes to the observation frequently made by the West Indians, that the Negroes, when they become free, will not work; and that the exports from the West Indies will therefore greatly diminish;—a proposition frequently put forward in West Indian publications, and supported by arguments, if not of a convincing, of a very forcible nature. The Report then puts into the mouths of the West Indians an assertion which they have never coupled with that proposition; viz., that all industry and exertion, on the part of the Slaves made free, will be at an end, and that they will merge again into the state of savages. At least, if such a proposition ever has been maintained, it is so gratuitously absurd, that it was not worth while to advert to

\* In the Appendix will be found a tabular exhibition of the products of Hayti, at present and at former periods, which will supply the best commentary upon the validity of this argument.

it as a substantive argument on the part of the West Indian body. In Hayti, all industry and exertion in the production of sugar, formerly the main export of that Island, is at an end, at least for all purposes of profitable exportation; and yet the Slaves, so far from merging into the state of savages, carry on various processes of production with pecuniary advantage. If productive industry, whether casual or continuous, were to be considered as the sole test of civilization—in that case it might be contended, that civilization had retrograded in Hayti within the last thirty years; but such an opinion ought not to be admitted without very careful qualification. A reference to the tabular statement in the Appendix will show that, in the space of one year (1789) the French part of St. Domingo shipped to France alone as much sugar as amounted in value to half the price which President Boyer is to pay to France for the fee-simple of the whole Island.

It may be assumed, that the coerced and qualified freedom in Hayti (for the freedom there is but qualified and coerced) is, a more happy state for the labouring free Black, than Slavery is for the Slave in Jamaica. Nor can it be denied that the capital of the former race of proprietors in that country, having been usurped by the Black race, may be beneficially employed in their hands; that is to say, the wealth created may be greater than the wealth consumed in its pro-



duction, although the capital is not employed in the cultivation of sugar, without which cultivation those former Proprietors would have been ruined, unless they had received compensation for its abandonment. Hayti may now be rich and powerful—she may become still more rich, and more powerful, under the operation of the new system of things, and independently of the exportation of sugar. But does this admission in any degree embarrass the maintenance of the proposition, that in our own West Indian Colonies, the transfer of capital from sugar production to any other class of production, cannot be effected without such serious injury as requires compensation? With this axiom in view, it is not to be expected that the West Indian Planters will accept the example of Hayti as an encouragement to press forward a state of things, which, as far as the analogy of Hayti can be taken, will lead to a discontinuance of the production of sugar. At least, they could not be expected voluntarily to press on this course, if compensation were not secured to them,—until it could be shown, on the one hand, that that species of production which has succeeded the production of sugar in Hayti, would prove so beneficial to them, as to prevent all the inconveniences of the change ; or, on the other hand, that their Slaves, when made free, would be more willing to submit to the exertion of sugar cultivation, than the freed Slaves of

Hayti have been found to be. The Colonial Proprietor of sugar, as a British subject, has an inherent right of employing his capital in the most productive manner. Can he with justice be compelled to employ his capital less profitably, without being compensated for the transfer? If this principle, then, be applied to the state of Hayti, we shall find that all those arguments which bring forward the present state of that country as an imitable model, and as a reason to justify *abolition without compensation*, are more specious than real, and cannot be applied, with logical effect, in any closely-reasoned argument on the state of West Indian Slavery.

Keeping this principle in view, the reader will be more prepared to appreciate the weakness of the argument contained in the following passage from the Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society: “ But to console us under this  
 “ alarm, let us look again to Hayti. There the  
 “ Slaves were to the full as depressed as our  
 “ Slaves now are, and much more ignorant. They  
 “ have been engaged also in a struggle for liberty,  
 “ through a long-protracted period of blood and  
 “ desolation, of confusion and anarchy. Twenty  
 “ years of sanguinary conflict, of the most barbarizing description, sometimes with foreign,  
 “ sometimes with domestic enemies, were little  
 “ calculated to train them to habits of industry,  
 “ or to the arts of peace. And yet what do we

“ witness in their case? They have contrived,  
 “ in the period which has since elapsed, at least  
 “ to maintain themselves without foreign aid.  
 “ Though it was necessary, and still unhappily  
 “ is necessary, to keep a large portion of the ablest  
 “ and most active labourers under arms (who are  
 “ of course sustained by the labour of the rest,)  
 “ their own exertions have alone ministered to  
 “ their subsistence, as well as defrayed the entire  
 “ expenditure of the state. They have not only  
 “ abundantly supplied their wants by their own  
 “ labour, but they have nearly, if not more than,  
 “ doubled their numbers in twenty years. And  
 “ while they have done this, they have been ad-  
 “ vancing in intelligence, respectability, and  
 “ wealth. Schools have been multiplied among  
 “ them, knowledge has been widely diffused, the  
 “ arts of civilized life have been cultivated, the  
 “ reign of order and law has been established, secu-  
 “ rity has been given to property, and industry,  
 “ having its reward, has been progressively in-  
 “ creasing its boundaries. *But, in reply to this,*  
 “ *we are gravely told, that the Haytiens export no*  
 “ *sugar. This is the dark spot in their condition, for*  
 “ *which nothing can compensate in the eye of a colonial*  
 “ *partisan.* They may live in comfort, they may  
 “ be well fed and well clothed, they may multi-  
 “ ply their population, they may be free, united,  
 “ powerful, and happy, but all this affords no  
 “ satisfaction, since they do not cultivate sugar,

“ and cultivate it in gangs, under the whip, as in  
 “ the English islands. And yet, that they labour  
 “ sufficiently to supply all their reasonable wants  
 “ is evident from this, that the value of foreign  
 “ merchandise imported into Hayti, in the year  
 “ 1822, and consumed there (the whole of which  
 “ must have been paid for by the produce of  
 “ Haytian labour) amounted, by the official returns  
 “ of that island, to three millions sterling.”

With reference to this subject, it will be seen how necessary it is to distinguish between the resolutions moved by Mr. Canning, and that moved by Mr. Buxton. The example of Hayti would be a very fair example to be adduced by any person who was bound by Mr. Buxton's resolution, and by that resolution only. If Parliament stood only pledged to pursue measures with respect to the well-being of the Slaves (which was all to which Mr. Buxton's resolution pledged them), there can be no doubt that, with due management, the abandonment of sugar cultivation in the West Indies might be attended with a change which would operate the well-being of the Slaves; but how does the analogy of Hayti meet that part of the resolutions of Mr. Canning which couples the well-being of the Slaves with “ *the interests of private property* ?” and how can any member of Parliament, bound, and religiously bound, to abide by the spirit of the resolutions moved by Mr. Canning, to which such member personally con-



sented, reconcile it to himself to bring forward the analogy of Hayti, as a proof that emancipation should take effect without adequate compensation? If it can be shown (which it can to demonstration,) that the change of the cultivation of an estate from sugar to any other sort of West Indian produce, having exchangeable value in Europe, requiring less labour, and soil of a different quality, is impracticable without ruin (as impracticable as it is for a Norfolk farmer to grow wheat with profit on the same land on which he did grow it with profit during certain periods of the war); it is really an appeal unworthy of the character of those who make it with apparent sincerity, to cite the state of Hayti as an imitable example of an early and unprogressive termination of slavery. All that is wanted to complete this part of the argument, and to show the little tendency that exists in Slaves, when made free, to pursue the cultivation of sugar, or even indigo (that is, of a production requiring steady continuous labour), will be furnished by a careful examination of the tabular statement to be found in Appendix A.

On the questions of the national advantage of maintaining the West Indian Colonies, whether Slave or free, of their past or present value, or of the loss or advantage incident to their possession, it is unnecessary to enter in this place;—not because the subject is not one of the utmost importance to the practical politician, but because it

is not necessarily connected with the practical question of West Indian Slavery, as arising out of the resolutions of the House of Commons in 1823.

It has already been shown that, whatever the Abolitionists of the present day may contemplate, the Abolitionists of 1807 contemplated slow and progressive emancipation, that their reasoning on that subject was sound and philosophical, and that the course best calculated to realize the views which they entertained, is that which has been adopted by the government in fulfilment of the resolutions of May, 1823\*. It is now necessary to examine the question, whether compensation be due to the West Indian for his co-operation in the progress of this national experiment, and whether the most satisfactory principle of compensation be not already introduced into the Trinidad Order in Council.

In the voluminous protests that have been received from Trinidad on the subject of the Order in Council, and which have been printed and laid before Parliament, there is hardly any one point

\* One of the most beneficial effects which the Order in Council has already produced in Trinidad has been, the general introduction of task work on the following principle. An average day's work is allotted to every Negro; and, at whatever time of the day he finishes that work, the remainder of the day is at his own disposal, whether for purposes of relaxation, or of employment, which may be beneficial to himself personally.

in the order which it is not contended is calculated to depreciate property. The greater part of the clauses of that Order, however, contain enactments, the effect of which, whether taken separately or in the aggregate, cannot present a just claim for national compensation. The point at which the planter can be entitled to prefer a claim for compensation, is that where regulation of property ends, and where compulsory substitution of money for labour commences; that is, in other words, where a party is forced to part, for a money price, with that which he would wish to retain.

It is in vain to talk of the inconvenience arising from Slaves having a legal right to appeal to a Protector, to refer to the diminished work which the discontinuance of summary punishment in the field is calculated to produce, or to the consequences of the total abolition of female flogging. It is equally in vain to protest against the prohibition of compulsory Sunday labour, the necessity of keeping a record of punishments, the provisions for marriages of Slaves, the non-separation of families, the right of Slaves to property, the establishment of Savings Banks, the introduction of Slave evidence, or the duties of the Protector. These are not regulations of a nature to establish a claim for compensation. It may be admitted that, in the infancy of these regulations, some diminution of work may take place, which may operate to the

prejudice of the master ; but the analogies of domestic legislation furnish innumerable instances of interference in the way of regulation in the limitation of the hours of work, and prescribing a certain quantity of food of both labourers and artisans, which were calculated, in the first instance, to prejudice the pecuniary interests of their employers, *but which had their compensating advantages in the improved condition of the labourers themselves.* It was in the nature of a compulsion to the capitalist to keep his machinery in good order. It is therefore, as already remarked, at the point where regulation of property ends, and where compulsory substitution of property commences, that compensation is to be considered.

It must be recollected that the Trinidad Order in Council was, in a certain sense, forced upon the inhabitants of Trinidad ; they protested loudly against its principle and its enactments, as may be seen in the papers which have been printed and laid before the House of Commons. The inhabitants petitioned against it, the Cabildo petitioned against it, the Colonial Council remonstrated against it ; and it is to be observed that these parties were loud in their expressions of their horror of slavery as a state, but contended that, *as their property was involved in its maintenance,* they could not consent, *without compensation,* to a series of measures which must have the effect of depreciating that property. His Majesty's Go-



vernment, however, executed their full and entire purpose, and the Order in Council, originally sent from this country, and subsequently moulded under instructions from Lord Bathurst, became the practical law of Trinidad.

In Demerara, however, the new Slave Code cannot be said to have been compulsorily enforced. The Court of Policy, a body somewhat anomalous in its nature, but executing practically certain judicial, legislative, and financial functions, was induced, under the strong recommendation of Lord Bathurst, to initiate the new Slave Code, instead of receiving it, as in Trinidad, as a compulsory measure enforced by the mother country. How far the probability of the consequences of refusal might have induced them to do this, is another question. Still it is of the highest conceivable importance, to have to show, as a precedent to the rest of the West Indies, the independent initiation, on the part of a constituted body in a Slave colony, of that new system of measures for the amelioration of the Slave population which were first introduced into the Trinidad Order in Council: and to the Court of Policy in Demerara, especially when the calamitous circumstances of the insurrection are considered, much credit is due for the course that they have taken.

The papers already laid before Parliament will show that the Court of Policy had, *with four ex-*

*ceptions*, embodied the substance of all the clauses of the Trinidad Order in Council, with such modifications as local circumstances made necessary; and that it was their intention to promulgate a local law to that extent. Those four exceptions were, first, the marriage of Slaves; second, payment of wages to Slaves for work considered as Sunday work; third, possession of land by Slaves and the power of suing in court in their own names; fourth, the right of the Slave to purchase his own manumission.

It must be admitted that the necessity of issuing at home such an Order in Council will do away much of the advantage which the initiation of the law by the Court of Policy itself is calculated to produce within the colony,—an advantage to the principle of which the Abolitionists of 1807 were entirely consentient; and it will prevent the existence of a precedent of *a satisfactory code voluntarily adopted by a recognised body in the West Indies*. Such a code, as an example, would furnish the greatest practical facility in inducing the legislatures throughout the West Indies to take the same course of proceeding, and at once to carry into effect the purification of their own laws upon the subject, by the introduction of new and improved codes. It has been understood in Demerara, that the Court of Policy have not adhered to their objections in point of marriage; and it will be observed that the three remaining points of

Sunday wages, Slave property, and compulsory manumission under certain qualifications, are all susceptible of one simple explanation, namely, the dread of losing the means of profitably employing their capital in the culture of their plantations, if it should become the law of the colony that a Slave may at any time manumit himself or his relations upon the production of a sufficient price, to be assessed as directed in the Trinidad Order.

With respect to the point of Sunday wages, nothing can be more clear or consistent than the line which has been taken by the Government. Lord Bathurst has maintained (*vide* Letter to Sir Ralph Woodford) that the Slave is entitled to one day out of the seven for his own benefit and his own use, and, consequently, that the master is not entitled to compulsory labour from the Slave on that day. Particular exceptions of a palpable nature are made and recorded, such as domestic servants, &c., and the law enacts that all field-labour executed by the Slave on Sunday, or what is to be considered as Sunday, as well as all labour in the culture of sugar, or coffee, or cotton, if executed by the Slave, is to be remunerated by wages, to be assessed by the Protector.

The question, however, which is of the very essence of the whole, and may be considered as

the most vital question affecting the interests of the West Indies, is that of *the right of manumission independent of the will of the master*. And it is to be remembered, in arguing abstractedly on this subject without reference to compensation, that an argument which might prove that the planter of Barbadoes or Antigua would suffer very little under the operation of such a law, would not necessarily prove that the planter of Demerara or Jamaica would not be seriously injured by it. We must consider the remonstrances of the Demerara planter upon their own grounds, and not be led away by any generalization which will not stand the test of particular inquiry.

As a preliminary, however, to the examination of this part of the subject, it will be necessary to consider how the comparative merits of free and slave labour are estimated by what may be called the two conflicting parties of West Indians and Abolitionists. Not but that, in many instances, individuals on either side will be found to approximate very nearly in their opinions; but, in general, the two classes may be considered as diametrically opposed to each other.

The planters resident in the West Indies, very generally protest against ameliorating measures in themselves unobjectionable, from the apprehension that they have a tendency to supersede



a state of coerced labour, before a state of voluntary, that is, free labour, shall be sufficiently established to supply its place. But if it can be practically demonstrated that, should this contingency take place, *a just and equitable principle of compensation, with respect to this precise result, is to be found in the manumission clauses of the Trinidad Order, which they are called upon to adopt*, and if they shall be satisfied, from the practical nature of that proposed principle of compensation, that it will fairly meet the injury which they anticipate, *it is impossible to suppose that they will persevere in their opposition to its adoption*. The objections urged by the Court of Policy in Demerara to the clause of manumission are expressed in a note, p. 273, of the Parliamentary Papers, as follows:—

“ The Court, in its anxiety to conform, as much  
 “ as possible, to the provisions of the Trinidad  
 “ Order, has, after the maturest consideration,  
 “ found itself called upon by its duty, to con-  
 “ fine its deliberations to the object of simplify-  
 “ ing the mode of manumission, and rendering it  
 “ as little expensive as possible, and particularly  
 “ of securing to the Slave thus manumitted his  
 “ freedom in the most formal and unquestionable  
 “ manner. It has felt it to be beyond its power,  
 “ without the breach of a sacred trust, which binds  
 “ its members to protect the rights and interests

“ of their fellow-colonists, by whom they are no-  
 “ minated for that purpose, to give their sanction  
 “ to any measure which could, even by construc-  
 “ tion, imply an acknowledged right on the part  
 “ of the Slave to demand his freedom, *invito do-*  
 “ *mino*. They feel themselves called upon openly  
 “ to avow the principle, that they have not the  
 “ right to invade the property of their fellow-colo-  
 “ nists, by admitting that they can in any manner  
 “ be deprived of it contrary to the law, by which  
 “ it is secured to them, and which his Majesty  
 “ has graciously been pleased to guarantee by the  
 “ articles of capitulation, on which this Colony  
 “ surrendered to his Majesty’s arms. This prin-  
 “ ciple is laid down in Earl Bathurst’s letter of the  
 “ 9th July, 1823, addressed to governors of colo-  
 “ nies having local legislatures, wherein the *con-*  
 “ *sent of the master* is distinctly coupled with the  
 “ application to be made by or on the behalf of a  
 “ Slave for freedom, and the Court has the more  
 “ firmly adhered to the same principle, since  
 “ the confirmation of it by Earl Bathurst in his  
 “ despatch of 18th March, 1824, to Sir B. D’Ur-  
 “ ban, wherein his lordship states that, as the  
 “ Trinidad Order in Council has been framed ac-  
 “ cording to the circumstances of the Spanish  
 “ law, so his lordship desires the transmission  
 “ of the draft of an Order in Council, applying  
 “ the same provisions to the circumstances of the

“ Dutch law in the colony of Demerara, The  
 “ difference between the Spanish law in Trinidad  
 “ and the Dutch law in Demerara, respecting  
 “ Slave property, is great. The Trinidad Order  
 “ in Council has not affected the principle of  
 “ the Spanish law, which allows a Slave to en-  
 “ franchise himself by purchase. The Dutch law  
 “ in this colony gives no such right whatever  
 “ to a Slave:—here the interest of an owner  
 “ in his Slave is that of fee-simple absolute; he  
 “ purchased upon that tenure, he has continued  
 “ to hold upon the same, and cannot be deprived  
 “ of that legal title without a direct violation of  
 “ property, the law alone can deprive him of it in  
 “ consequence of some judicial process by which  
 “ he is compelled to surrender it in satisfaction of  
 “ some debt. In Trinidad it is otherwise: a per-  
 “ son purchasing a Slave in that colony knows be-  
 “ forehand that he acquires only a precarious title  
 “ in such a Slave, which depends on the ability  
 “ of the Slave to purchase himself. But let the  
 “ Spanish law be what it may, it can never alter  
 “ the existing law of this colony; and it may  
 “ fairly be inferred from Lord Bathurst’s letter,  
 “ that no subversion of the law is intended, and  
 “ that it is far from the intention of his Majesty’s  
 “ government to annihilate in this colony the  
 “ right of property, which is scrupulously held  
 “ sacred throughout his Majesty’s dominions.

“ Slaves in this colony are chattels as much as  
 “ any other moveable property, unless attached to  
 “ a mortgaged property, and included in the mort-  
 “ gage, when, during the existence of such mort-  
 “ gage, they are considered as part of the whole  
 “ property. In the latter case, the owner of such  
 “ mortgaged estate cannot dismember his pro-  
 “ perty piecemeal, but without such mortgage he  
 “ has the entire control over his Slaves. Neither  
 “ is it the law that proprietors can be forced to  
 “ dispose of their property, real or personal, when  
 “ its value is offered to them by others. To give  
 “ to the Slave the right of purchasing himself  
 “ against the will and consent of his owner, will  
 “ annihilate the right of the owner, and confer  
 “ on the Slave a power which no other person  
 “ possesses.

“ The ruinous effects of such a state of things  
 “ could hardly be calculated in their full extent.  
 “ All tradesmen, such as carpenters, masons,  
 “ coopers, &c., having one or a few Slaves whom  
 “ they have brought up to their trade, and with  
 “ whom they earn their living, would be exposed  
 “ to lose these Slaves, the more valuable to them,  
 “ in proportion to the smallness of their number.  
 “ Unprincipled persons might tamper with Slaves,  
 “ furnish them, on certain conditions, with money,  
 “ and entice them in this way from the service of  
 “ their owner, with a view to employ them under



“ an indenture, and in their new condition pro-  
 “ bably ill-treat them; while the owner, who is  
 “ deprived of them, sustains a loss which no  
 “ money can repair: his trade is at a stand, or at  
 “ least on the decline; he is obliged from want  
 “ of employment sufficient to maintain his family,  
 “ to spend for their support the money he has  
 “ received for the Slaves thus forced from him;  
 “ and, finally, he becomes a beggar, surrounded  
 “ by a miserable family, without means to relieve  
 “ them.

“ The fate of the Planters would be equally  
 “ distressing. It is fairly calculated that the  
 “ average number of able effective people upon  
 “ an estate is about one-third of the whole gang,  
 “ the remaining two-thirds being composed of  
 “ infants, who are a burden to the owner, and of  
 “ the aged, who receive from him support. The  
 “ parties most able to obtain their freedom are  
 “ among the former, a class without whose as-  
 “ sistance the proprietor would be unable to carry  
 “ on the cultivation and management of his  
 “ property. If the power to purchase freedom  
 “ be absolutely vested in the Slave, free from all  
 “ control on the part of the owner, the latter  
 “ would hold the same by a precarious tenure,  
 “ defeasible on the production of a sum of money,  
 “ either by the Slave, or any other on his behalf.  
 “ Boilers, tradesmen of every description, and

“ others, who form the most useful and indispen-  
 “ sable class, might thus be removed from the  
 “ estate, to the irremediable detriment of the  
 “ property, and consequent ruin of the owner, as  
 “ the non-importation of Slaves renders the re-  
 “ placing of such Slaves so manumitted a matter  
 “ of impossibility. In progress of a short time, a  
 “ most valuable estate might thus be rendered  
 “ useless, for the want of able men, *cultivators* as  
 “ well as tradesmen.”

The answer to this remonstrance has not yet appeared in any printed papers. *If, however, the principle of compensation were not strictly involved in the compulsory manumission clauses in the Trinidad Order,* it might be contended, that there were great and substantial reasons for this remonstrance of the Demerara Court of Policy against those clauses. As a preliminary, however, to the consideration of the manner in which a principle of compensation, of the most satisfactory nature, appears to be involved in the Trinidad Order, it will be necessary to observe, that all claim to compensation must depend on the validity of the complaint made in the concluding passage of this remonstrance; and if the effect of compulsory manumission be to deprive the Planter of his means of cultivation, to the irremediable detriment of the property (as the remonstrance expresses), and to the consequent ruin of the owner, it is impossible for such owner

not to have a claim for compensation under Mr. Canning's resolutions. The question, then, is, Will the manumitted Slave be disposed to work for wages which can be afforded by the Master, without such a diminution of profit as will entitle him to a claim of compensation? That there are Slaves who will so work, I am not prepared to deny. Undoubtedly Slaves employed in any mechanical trades, not in themselves severely laborious, or in the discharge of domestic duties as servants, or in any sort of labour which does not involve the necessity of constant, steady exertion, under a tropical sun, may be found, when free, to work for such wages as the Master can fairly afford. But the greatest loss which the Planter could sustain, would be that of his best agricultural Slave; that is, of a Slave by whose labour his sugar cultivation is mainly carried on, and who is, by the terms of the proposition, a strong, able-bodied, free-working man. If the Planter could, by means of wages, induce such a Slave, when made free, to continue the same steady supply of labour which he received from him before his emancipation, and if those wages did not exceed the expense which is entailed upon the Master under the Slave system of maintaining the Slave and his family from infancy to death, *in that case, so far from suffering an injury in the event of compulsory manumission, even without price, he would receive a benefit; as he would*

be able to employ his capital without the insecurity inseparable from Slave property ; and the same beneficial change which took place in Europe, and especially in England, and which matured the feudal villein into a free man, would take place with equal advantage in the West Indies. The extreme Abolitionist would not hesitate to assert, that it would so take place, and that there was no doubt but that the operation of *the principle of bettering his condition* would induce the manumitted Slave to work steadily and faithfully from day to day, and with physical powers rather increased than diminished, in his new state as a free man, having emerged from the degrading and depressing state of servitude.

The West Indian would, on the other hand, entirely assent, in the abstract, to the effect of that stimulus which *the desire of bettering his condition* is calculated to produce on the physical exertions of the labourer ; but he would contend that the labourer himself must be, in all cases, left to judge as to what really is “ *a bettering of his condition* ;” and that, in the Torrid Zone, sugar-labour is so repugnant to the physical instinct of the black (while at the same time it is impossible to the white), that no sense of the advantages to be derived from the acquisition of property will ever induce the negro to undergo that labour, and thereby to abandon the luxury of repose ; and he will refer to the very arguments of



the individual who is going to make a motion upon the subject in the course of the present session, in confirmation of this unchangeable principle. Mr. Brougham, in his "Colonial Policy," borrowing most of his opinions from M. Malouet, Minister of Marine and Colonies under the French government, has enforced this part of the argument in detail, and with a force of illustration which would make it utterly impossible for him ever to contradict such opinions, however he may qualify them. The West Indian will then proceed to assert, that sugar-labour demands a regular unintermitting exertion from day to day, during the course of the cultivation and crop; and, that, as the interests of the majority of the West India body are involved in the cultivation of sugar, *and of sugar only*, ruin must ensue if that cultivation cannot be carried on under a system of wages, as well as under a system of Slavery. He will also explain that the transmutation of a sugar estate, with all its machinery and buildings, into an estate upon which it is intended to cultivate other produce yielding equal profit to the proprietor, is neither more nor less than impracticable.

Hitherto the arguments that might be used by the West Indians generally have been adverted to; but the Planter in Demerara would have a still stronger case. He would say, that it must be admitted, that the same principle which re-

gulates the amount of wages in other countries in the world will be found to operate in Demerara, according to the peculiar circumstances of that Colony.

In illustration of what must necessarily be more or less, a scientific proposition, a passage may be quoted from a very valuable treatise of Colonel Torrens, which has been specially alluded to by the late Mr. Ricardo, in the third edition of his “Principles of Political Economy,” page 91, as containing, in a condensed form, the true principles upon this subject,—principles, in fact, which are not denied by any writer whatsoever.

“The proper way of regarding labour, is, as a commodity in the market. It therefore has, as well as every thing else, its market price, and its natural price. The market price of labour is regulated by the proportion which, at any time, and any place, may exist between the demand and the supply:—its natural price is governed by other laws, and consists in such a quantity of the necessaries and comforts of life, *as, from the nature of the climate, and the habits of the country,* are necessary to support the labourer, and to enable him to rear such a family as may preserve in the market an undiminished supply of labour. That the labourer must usually obtain for his work a sufficient quantity of those things which the climate may render necessary to preserve himself and such a fa-

“mily as may keep up the supply of labour to  
 “the demand in healthful existence, is self-  
 “evident, and when we consider that things not  
 “originally necessary to healthful existence, often  
 “become so from use, and that men will be de-  
 “terred from marriage, unless they have a pro-  
 “spect of rearing their families in the mode of  
 “living to which they have been accustomed, it  
 “is obvious that the labourer must obtain for  
 “his work *not only what the climate may render ne-*  
 “*cessary, but what the habits of the country, operating*  
 “*as a second nature, may require.* From this ac-  
 “count of the natural price of labour, it is evident  
 “that it may be liable to very considerable va-  
 “riations. The shelter and the clothing which  
 “are indispensable in one country, may be nowise  
 “necessary in another; and a labourer in Hin-  
 “dostan may continue to work with perfect  
 “vigour, though receiving, as his natural wages,  
 “only such a supply of covering as would be in-  
 “sufficient to preserve a labourer in Russia from  
 “perishing. Even in countries situated in the  
 “same climate, different habits of living will  
 “often occasion variations in the natural price of  
 “labour, as considerable as those which are pro-  
 “duced by natural causes. Alterations, however,  
 “in the natural price of labour cannot be sud-  
 “denly effected. *That part of this price which de-*  
 “*pends upon climate is unchangeable;* and even the  
 “part that is determined by the habits of living,

“ and the prudential check which may exist with  
 “ respect to marriage, can be affected only by  
 “ those circumstances of prosperity or decay, and  
 “ by those moral causes of instruction and ci-  
 “ vilization, which are ever gradual in their opera-  
 “ tion. The natural price of labour, therefore,  
 “ though it varies under different climates, and  
 “ with the different stages of national improve-  
 “ ment, may, in any given time and place, be re-  
 “ garded as very nearly stationary. While the  
 “ natural price of labour is thus steady, its market  
 “ price, as has been already observed, fluctuates  
 “ perpetually, according to the proportion of its  
 “ supply in the market. The price which labour  
 “ fetches in the market may often be considerably  
 “ more, and often considerably less, than that  
 “ which, from the climate and habits of living,  
 “ is necessary to maintain the labourer and his  
 “ family. But notwithstanding those occasional  
 “ variations, the natural and the market price of  
 “ labour have a mutual influence on each other,  
 “ and cannot long be separated.”

If these principles, so clearly laid down, be  
 admitted to be sound and unanswerable, how will  
 they apply to Demerara, under the admitted cir-  
 cumstances of the extraordinary fertility of that  
 country, where not one-thousandth part of the  
 most fertile land in the country is occupied,—  
 where a population, a thousand times as great as  
 its actual population, could be sustained from the



products of the soil without inconvenience? It necessarily follows, that the natural wages of labour must be low in such a country; and so far it might appear that the Planter would not be prejudiced by the change from slavery to freedom, inasmuch as he would not be called upon to give other than low wages. But could he induce the Slave, made free, to work for those wages? If not, he must raise them, in order to induce him to work. But it must be remembered, that there is a limitation in the extent to which he could raise them. Any rate of wages, given to a Slave made free, which would materially exceed the expense now averagely incurred under the Slave system for the entire support of an individual working Slave, could not be afforded by the Master. To this expense would be superadded the interest of the money paid for his manumission; but beyond that limit he could not go, without a palpable diminution of his profits. Nor could he proceed with his cultivation *at all*, if the rate of wages materially exceeded that amount which he would gain by the price of the manumission, and by his exemption from future expense by the support of the Slave. Other countries, where the Slave system was in force, or where density of population, encroaching on the means of subsistence, compelled the labourer to work, as the only means of acquiring a subsistence would undersell him in the market of the world.

A consideration of the circumstances in which the black labourer in Demerara will be placed when free, will leave little doubt as to the degree of augmentation of wages which will be necessary to bribe him to exertion, *if, indeed, any considerable increase would be certain to accomplish that purpose*; and it could easily be shewn that the master could not *afford* to offer that temptation, that is, to pay such wages, in his character of a producer of sugar.

A free black has only to settle himself where he pleases within the colony of Demerara, he has only to retire up the river, a few miles back from the extreme margin of the very small portion of occupied ground, where he will find space enough for many thousand times the existing slave population of that colony to spread themselves and their descendants, without any serious obstacle being opposed to them by the scattered aborigines of the country; he will there, on his new location, be able to obtain, by the strenuous exertion of one single day, enough to satisfy all his natural and artificial wants for the space of a week. In addition, he will have the resources of the river and the woods for the supply of fish and game; and he will enjoy that state which all men agree is the state most congenial to the human being in tropical climates—that of repose. And yet, under these circumstances, the Abolitionist unhesitatingly pronounces that he will be forth-

coming as a free and willing servant, to execute the purposes of his master for moderate and reasonable wages. The question is, which opinion is the most correct, the affirmation or the negation of that proposition? And it must be remembered that if the negative be the true opinion, the ruin of the master is, under these given circumstances, involved in the compulsory manumission of his slaves without practical compensation, *inasmuch as he cannot replace their labour by any conceivable means.* The white population cannot execute the work, on account of the effect of the climate upon their physical constitutions:—the Abolition Act prevents the introduction of African Slaves; and the same causes which it is here contended would be likely to operate upon the Demerara Slave “made free,” would operate in a tenfold ratio upon the free African black, if such a class could be introduced into the colony. It might, however, be observed, that all these anticipated consequences might be prevented if a law were to be passed, appropriating all the land in the colony to the use of the crown, for example, and effectually preventing the self-location of the free black in the manner detailed.—Undoubtedly, such a law could be passed; but the question is, could it be enforced? Would it not be contrary to the principles of justice, and above all, be utterly incompatible with the term *freedom*? In addition to which, and to show the fallacy (if it

were necessary) of such a mode of prevention, the black, now free, has only to cross a creek of the width of a street, when he finds himself in the territory of Columbia, where slavery has ceased by law to exist.

It may not be inconvenient to illustrate these observations by a reference to the circumstances of India and of Surinam ; and first of India.—It is contended that, because sugar is produced by free labourers in India, it follows as an inevitable consequence, that it could be produced by free labourers in the West Indies ; and probably more inconsistency has been vented on this subject than upon any other which has occupied the attention of political economists. India has a population dense in the extreme,—she has little or no unoccupied land of the first class of fertility,—and her capital, however large in the aggregate, is extremely small in proportion to the extent of space, and to the density of population, upon which it is employed. Demerara, on the contrary, has a population bearing no proportion to her territory,—she has incalculable quantities of unoccupied land of the first class of fertility ; and she has a large capital employed upon a very small space, which arises from the extraordinary fertility of her soil. And yet, notwithstanding these distinctions between the two countries, marked by the hand of Providence, the same reasoning is made to apply to both, and it is con-



tended that, because a Hindoo will work at agricultural labour for wages, a Demerara free black will necessarily do the same. The Hindoo labourer only receives three half-pence per day; and why are his wages so low? because his employer knows that, if the labourer does not choose to work for that sum, he has no alternative but comparative starvation; there is no waste land, that he can cultivate with profit—no waste land, from the cultivation of which he himself can derive greater advantage than he would do as a labourer receiving wages; and so cheap are his food and his clothing, that the sum of three half-pence per day is sufficient for the purpose of providing them. If it were possible to suppose that the climate of India were to become more cold, and the soil less favourable to the production of rice, the money-price of labour (that is wages) must rise, or the people would actually perish; and this is the key to the principle of those desolating famines which have so often been recorded in Indian history.

In Surinam, there are settlements of free blacks in the back country, to the number of thirty or forty thousand, as they have been estimated by some writers, but which are represented as not containing more than sixteen or twenty thousand, by persons who have visited them at later periods. These blacks appear to continue at the lowest state of civilization, and verify all the prin-

ciples which might otherwise be pronounced *theoretical* ; and it would not be too much to prophesy that they will remain more or less in that state, until either education and religious instruction shall raise them in their own estimation, and prepare them for the acquirement of more than the mere physical sustenance of life, or until their increasing population, or any encroachment upon the territory which they inhabit, shall impose upon them greater difficulty in providing themselves with means of average subsistence.

“ On connoit (says M. Malouet) \* l'établissement de nègres  
 “ libres à Surinam. Lors de mon voyage dans cette colonie,  
 “ leur chefs vinrent me visiter; ils vouloient réclamer mon  
 “ intercession auprès du Gouvernement Hollandois, pour l'exé-  
 “ cution de quelques articles de leur traité ; et je profitai de  
 “ toutes les facilités que cette circonstance me procuroit, pour  
 “ m'informer dans le plus grand détail de leur situation, de  
 “ leurs mœurs, commerce, culture, et police. Ils ne manquent  
 “ d'aucun des moyens d'exercer dans leurs villages nos arts  
 “ mecaniques ; ils ont parmi eux, des ouvriers de toute les  
 “ professions, échappés, comme les autres, des ateliers Hollan-  
 “ dais, et devenues libres par un traité fait les armes à la main.  
 “ Ils auroient même le plus grand intérêt à conserver au moins  
 “ l'espèce d'industrie nécessaire à leur défense et à l'accroisse-  
 “ ment de leurs forces. On croiroit qu'ils ont dû désirer se  
 “ mettre en état de se forger des armes, ou de réparer celles  
 “ dont ils se pourvoient par des échanges, et qu'ayant tous  
 “ connu les commodités, les jouissances de luxe, si précieuses  
 “ aux Européens, l'espoir d'y parvenir seroit pour eux un

\* Memoires sur les Colonies, tome v. p. 121.

“ motif de travail ; mais le repos, l’oisiveté, sont devenues,  
 “ dans leur état social, leur unique passion. Leur culture,  
 “ bornée à l’absolu nécessaire, les expose à d’affreuses disettes :  
 “ la chasse et la pêche sont alors leur seul ressource.—Repous-  
 “ sant constamment les missions religieuses, et toute occasion  
 “ de relation avec les blancs, ils ont préféré, pour s’assurer des  
 “ armes et quelques utensiles, de se constituer, par un traité,  
 “ gardes et géoliers de leurs camarades esclaves, qu’ils arrêtent  
 “ et revendent aux Hollandais, quand les déserteurs viennent  
 “ leur demander asile, ou qu’ils les surprennent dans les bois.  
 “ Leur police consiste, comme en Afrique, dans l’autorité ab-  
 “ solu d’un chef, que la multitude fait périr ou dépose quand  
 “ elle en est mécontente. Etablis à trente lieues des quartiers  
 “ habités par les Hollandais, ils ne veulent ni rapprochement,  
 “ ni commerce, ni d’autre travail, ni d’autres mœurs et coutumes  
 “ que celles de leur pays natal ; et ils se maintiennent dans  
 “ ces principes avec la plus persévérante obstination.”

How, then, any unprejudiced person can assert that “ *the tendency of mankind to better themselves is a sufficient security for their labour,*” and maintain that proposition as an axiom *universally true, without qualification or consideration of climate and circumstance*, is not easy to guess ; and yet it is maintained in the most formal manner, in the last publication of the Anti-Slavery Society. It is there asserted that, if the position were true, that “ Slavery in the West Indies is a better *and more* “ *gainful* condition of society than freedom,” it would be an arraignment “ of the moral govern-  
 “ ment of God.”

No one would hesitate to admit that, to maintain that “ Slavery, abstractedly considered, is a

“ *better or more natural* state of society than freedom,” would be to maintain a most irrational, absurd, and culpable opinion; but to contend that free labour in the West Indies is more profitable than Slave labour, and to assert that Slavery can be abolished there, *with benefit to the Proprietors of Slaves*, without that slow and progressive process of transmutation, which has characterized all similar changes recorded in history which have been *beneficial in their result*, is to maintain an opinion which savours more of passion and prejudice than of cool and dispassionate reasoning.

The West Indians, in their claim for compensation, challenge the whole world to produce a single satisfactory precedent, where a similar ratio exists between population, capital, and space, of Slaves, in any numbers, who have been made free, executing the necessary duties of tropical sugar labour for wages, or for any other consideration that could be supplied by the master, consistently with the maintenance of his necessary and average profits; and those who are reasonable amongst them are prepared to relax all their claims for compensation, and all their objections to manumission, if a precedent could be produced, so as fairly to demonstrate *even the probability of such a result*. In this country, where the advantages of property are so well appreciated, artificers, who receive very high



wages, and who can live very comfortably on the wages of three days per week, are very often found to pass the other three days in idleness, rather than employ them for the increase of their property, which increase necessarily involves "*the bettering of their condition*;" that is, in other words, they prefer present enjoyment to the acquisition of property, even when the inconvenience incurred by such exertion is incalculably less than that which is felt by the labourer in a tropical climate. In fact, the objection to manumission rests upon the uncertainty of obtaining that supply of labour which is necessary for the cultivation of their estates, and the absence of which must involve them in one common ruin. In reasoning thus upon general principles, there may be many exceptions; it is sufficient that the general reasoning be in itself correct and unanswerable.

The preceding observations, it is hoped, have sufficiently established the justice of a principle of compensation. It yet remains to be considered whether that principle be not unequivocally included in the manumission clauses of the Trinidad order. Those clauses provide that, where the master and the Slave cannot agree upon the terms of manumission, one appraiser shall be appointed by the Owner, another by the Protector, and an umpire by the Chief Judge, who shall value the Slave, and on the payment of the

appraised value into the treasury, such Slave shall be manumitted. But it does not appear upon what principle such value shall be assessed. In the preceding argument, an endeavour has been made to show that the real value of a Slave to his master must depend upon the facility or impossibility of substituting free labour for the labour of such Slave. Consequently, if the value of the Slave be determined upon the only equitable principle which appears to belong to the transaction, namely, the deterioration of the property of the master, the price of such Slave must carry with it the most equitable principle of compensation. In every special instance the appraisers will necessarily have to consider and to estimate the loss to the master. That loss will be measured by a comparison between the profit which the labour of that Slave produced to his master, after deducting the expense of his maintenance, and the profit which the master will derive from the labour of a free black, after deducting the wages which it will be necessary to give, in order to induce such free black to execute the duties previously performed by that Slave; and the price will be raised or depressed accordingly, under a rigid application of this principle. The case in which there will be the highest amount of compensation will be that in which the services of the Slave can neither be replaced by the purchase of another Slave within the colony (the only opportunity for

such purchase permitted by law), or by the services of a free black labourer; and in that case, the principle of compensation will extend to a definite proportion of the property of the planter, who will be obliged to throw out of cultivation part of that soil, which, from its extent and fertility, is a mere drug, (as is the case in Demerara), but from which he is incapable of deriving any adequate advantage, except through the instrumentality of labour. But in such a supposed case, if the ground will admit of being employed for other purposes than that of the production of sugar, producing a certain, though a diminished rate of profit, the difference between such diminished profit and that which he derived from sugar cultivation, will be the measure of the price of his Slave. In the opposite case, the Planter will receive little or nothing for his Slave. If it can be shewn that he can substitute free-labour for slave-labour with any proportionate profit, he has not any pretext for any compensation; but it is time, and time only that can dispose of this question; and if this experiment be pressed on before circumstances have provided a fund of free-labour, and if the Planter be called upon, under this clause, to part with a Slave, for whose services he cannot find a substitution, in that case, as already observed, the price of the Slave must be the price of a definite proportion of the estate of

the Planter, including his capital. Nor can the extreme Abolitionist complain with justice, that the price will be so inordinate as to frustrate the purposes of the enactment; for he will contend that free-labour will supply the place of slave-labour, with infinitely greater benefit both to the Planter and to the Slave. There is no human being possessed of proper feeling, who will not sincerely wish that this prediction may be verified; and if it be verified, the price of the manumission of the Slave, as already explained, will and ought to be little more than nominal. Who is there in this country who would exchange the paid services of a free labour for the services of a Slave, if it were possible to suppose that the transaction would be legal? The most sensitive Abolitionist may be assured that the best interests of the Planter would induce him, under similar circumstances, to prefer free-labour to slave-labour, whatever may be his conduct, his speeches, or his protests against any change in the condition of Slavery. The supposition that the price of the Slave will include a definite proportion of the value of the Planter's estate, is founded in the presumed fact that the Planter cannot purchase another Slave—that he cannot purchase another labourer—that his land is a drug. If, then, he has a property of a hundred Slaves, their value must be estimated in a ratio according to their relative powers and capacities; and the loss to the Master



if one Slave were taken from a gang of a hundred, would not be the loss of a hundredth proportion of his property, but of the value of that Slave with reference to the whole of his property. Let us suppose that, under this clause, a Slave demands his manumission,—that he has proofs of industry to warrant that demand,—and that he is prepared, from private sources, with adequate means for paying the price of his manumission. If a price which can command a Slave *equally good* be given to the Planter, he is precisely in the same condition as before. Under that supposition, he receives in fact no money; since the money paid by the manumitted Slave is immediately laid out in the purchase of another Slave. If such a Slave be not forthcoming, and he can only procure an *inferior Slave*, he will have the services of that inferior Slave, and a money price representing the difference. If *no Slave* whatever can be bought, he will have a money price calculated with reference to his being able, by means of wages, to obtain from a freeman, that labour which he had previously received from the Slave; and if the Slave so manumitted, or any other free labourer, will work for those wages, no injury will be sustained by the master; but if the master *can neither purchase a Slave nor obtain free-labour*, his compensation for the loss of the manumitted Slave ought to be, as before observed, a definite proportion of the value of the estate as a Sugar

Plantation, deducting its value for any other available purpose of cultivation. It is between the two extremes—absolute compensation where no free-labour *can* be substituted, and the absence of all compensation in consequence of the ready substitution of free-labour—that *the various means will* be struck, which will regulate the practical execution of this clause.—There may be colonies in the West Indies, where the effect of this principle will not be to raise the price, inasmuch as local circumstances will compel the manumitted Slave, from the want of subsistence, to work as a free labourer; but even this will be an operation of time. Can any man, then, in fairness contend that the price of the Slave is to be formed on one general average? Can any one hesitate to allow that if the interests of property are to be preserved, the price must be regulated by the injury sustained by the master in the loss of the Slave, rather than by the abstract value of the labour of the Slave taken on a general average?

If it be suggested as an objection, that the Planter may lose a Slave, whose skill in a particular employment, and acquaintance with the circumstances of the estate, may render the loss of his services irreparable by the substitution of the labour of a stranger,—the answer is, that the Planter must endeavour to train up, among his own Slaves, a succession of persons who may be ready to replace any such valuable men, whenever

they may be abstracted from the estate under the operation of this clause.

The purchase of children is not inconsistent with the principles which have been explained. The Slave child, in the earlier years of its existence, is necessarily a source of expense, and not of profit to the Planter. It is his future labour which is to compensate to the Planter for the expense of his maintenance and support. If, therefore, an adequate price be offered in the extreme infancy of the child, there is no reason why the Planter should object to receive the money, more than in the case of a Slave of mature age. If it were enacted that, independently of the price so received, the Slave child should be brought up by the Planter, and apprenticed for a period of years, during which his labour, not as a Slave, but as a coerced Freeman, should compensate for the expense of his support,—the price paid would be a remuneration to the Planter, for having dispossessed himself of his right to the contingent services of that Slave child at the period of the maturity of its strength, and of the interest which he had in its posterity. It will be observed that, under such a system of purchase, although the operation would necessarily be more slow, the price for the emancipation of the individual would be less ; and the apprenticeship of the child, thus made free, would be the best preparation for his future industry as a Freeman. This, on examina-

tion, will be found to be nothing more than the principle of purchasing a reversion, in which a smaller price is paid than would be paid at a future period. Practical difficulties may be found or pointed out in the details of a measure founded on these principles; but the question here again presents itself.—Can any plan of emancipation be suggested, involving a more sound or a *more* certain principle of compensation?

It may be argued, indeed, that this principle will be unpopular, both with *some* Abolitionists and with *some* Planters, but it will be so, only with those Abolitionists who contend that emancipation should be instantaneous, and with those Planters who contend that manumissions should never be compulsory.

If it be argued that unless free labour can be immediately substituted for slave labour, the purpose of the manumission clause will be frustrated, inasmuch as no Slave will ever be able to work out his own freedom under the accession of price which will take place, the answer is, that *it is for this country, if it be sincere in its anxiety to put an end to Slavery, to lend pecuniary assistance to such Slaves for the accomplishment of that purpose.* Such pecuniary assistance may be conveniently regulated with reference to the industry and good conduct of Slaves who may have partial means for their own manumission, in other words, to the proof which they have given of a disposition



to execute, as free labourers, the duties of steady and continuous industry; but the principle, in any conceivable case, is perfectly sound. The master will receive a compensation for his loss. *If the Slave be not manumitted, the clause is a dead letter.* If he be manumitted, it is the soundest principle on which compensation can operate. It is sound, because it is special and not general. It is sound, because it is progressive and not simultaneous. It is sound, because the earlier experiments will give the best commentary upon the means of carrying into effect the resolutions of the House of Commons. It is sound, because it will give the fairest opportunity of solving the intricate and serious problem of superseding a state of Slavery by a state of freedom, without ruin or revulsion either to the master or to the Slave.

If a patient examination be made of all the protests and proceedings of the West Indians, whether in legislative enactments, in colonial debates, or in private publications, since the resolutions proposed by Mr. Canning were passed in May, 1823, it will be apparent that their resistance to the meliorating measures suggested by the government is founded on the following principle. They contend that those resolutions not only contemplated, but sanctioned, "an equitable consideration of the interests of private property." They believe, or rather they have been induced to believe, that the government, from want of due consideration, have suggested measures of melio-

ration, which, if carried into effect, would materially trench upon those interests. They have not heard the word *compensation* ever pronounced in Parliament, and they *most erroneously* suppose that a principle of compensation has not been secured; whereas the most equitable principle of compensation has already (as the preceding observations have endeavoured to establish) been supplied in the clauses of the Trinidad Order in Council, which regulates the principle of manumission. Against that clause they have repeated the most constant and inveterate protests, expressed with too much apparent sincerity, to allow it to be supposed *that they have not misconstrued its tenor and effect*. It would appear, therefore, but just that, as a preliminary to any measures partaking even of the nature of direct authority, the tendency and bearing of the regulations suggested for their adoption should be still more fully and definitively explained to them. Not that it is to be understood that no advance has been made towards the embodying the clauses of the Trinidad Order in the statute-books of some of the colonies. The extent to which this has taken place, it is presumed, will be made public, if papers of the same description as those of the last year should again be laid before Parliament.

If, however, it be expedient to give this advice to the West Indian colonist, it is not the less expedient to counsel the extreme Abolitionist. Let

the solemn pledge of Parliament be fulfilled ; let the colonial laws be amended ;—let the obsolete and inapposite enactments be struck out of their codes ;—let the administration of justice be improved in regulation and in practice ;—let education and religion combine to raise the Negro in the scale of being, and prepare him for that new course of existence through which *he must pass* before he can be duly prepared for unqualified freedom ;—let the history of the infant liberty of our own country instruct, with cautious analogy, the regulators of this new experiment in the Western World ;—but let not an abstract detestation of slavery as a state operate to press on, with unnatural haste, a change which time, and time alone, can make effectual ;—and let not another experiment be added, in our own times, to that of the French Revolution, of attempting to mould theories in a moment into a practical shape, and of supposing that the image thus created will have the consistency and duration of matured and progressive effort.

It is equally unfortunate for the interests of humanity and of West Indian property, that certain prejudices should be so unfortunately rooted in the minds of the members of the colonial legislatures in the West Indies ; and undoubtedly, when the historian of some future day shall contemplate the transactions of the present times with that comparative dispassionateness which

belongs to the history of a former period, as contrasted with the speculations of the existing moment, he will protest, in the strongest terms, against these prejudices, and it will be fortunate if he have not to record the evils which have arisen from them.

The first and the most prominent of those prejudices is, the indisposition which exists to accommodate the local law to the local practice of the day, and a determination to retain in the Colonial Statute-book those severe and cruel laws, which, though severe and cruel, were absolutely necessary, as long as continued importations of Slaves were annually introduced into the West Indies. Those importations made it necessary that a sort of rigorous and summary state of martial law should be in perpetual action, for the security and even existence of the white population. Such laws, however, are, at the present moment, practically inoperative ; and why, therefore, should any hesitation be felt in repealing them ? Let a contrast be made between the Creole Slave and the Slave just escaped from the horrors of the middle passage, under which many of his friends and even relations may have sunk, condemned to perpetual labour, instead of enjoying a passive and indolent existence in his own country, where he was content to

Bask in the glare, or stem the tepid wave,  
And thank the gods for all the goods they gave.



If the habitual and necessary frame of mind of such a Slave be compared with that of a Creole Negro, born, or at least bred upon the estate, or having his former acuteness of feeling neutralized by a second nature, that is, by the habit of twenty years, is it possible to suppose that the same code of laws which were suited for the coercion of the one, can be necessary for the regulation of the other? *And if the West Indian legislatures would only adopt as law that which the lapse of time has progressively established in custom*, they would at once exempt themselves from those charges which, instead of losing by repetition, necessarily become more and more invidious in their cumulative character.

Another prejudice which pervades the local legislatures is, their indisposition to recognise, even progressively, the claims of the free coloured population; and nothing would more strongly excite surprise, if the tendency of small communities to confirm and perpetuate prejudice were not correctly appreciated, than to find men of intelligence and information, prepared to maintain that, although individuals belonging to the free coloured race may have received the advantages of liberal education, and may possess the power which property gives for the developement of those advantages, yet neither education nor property ought ever to entitle such men to any privileges enjoyed by the whites,

Nothing can be more natural, if not justifiable, than the repugnance of the whites in the West Indies, to admit to all the privileges of the whites free persons of colour, who have not those qualifications for such admission ; but to suppose that persons of education and property can be subjected to perpetual exclusion, and that the experiment even of progressive privileges is to be withheld from them, is to suppose that those immutable laws which establish the principles by which human society is held together can be violated with impunity.

But, however just the opinion of the impolicy of these prejudices may be—however urgent the effort ought to be to diminish and obliterate them, it must not be supposed that their existence is confined to England and her colonies alone. An Act has just passed the legislature of the State of South Carolina amending the law which *already prohibits* the introduction of persons of colour into that state ; and a clause in the amended Act runs thus:—" On the arrival of packets and all other  
 " vessels having on board any coloured persons,  
 " the sheriff of the district shall repair on board  
 " the vessel, and order the captain to remove his  
 " vessel into the stream, at the distance of not  
 " less than 150 yards from the wharf, and to load  
 " and unload the same by lighters, under the penalty of not less than one thousand dollars for  
 " refusal or non-compliance."—It must not be

forgotten that this apprehension of moral contagion arising from the introduction of free people of colour into a Slave state, at the close of the year 1825, is found in a country where there is a white population of above eight millions.

The indisposition of some of the local legislatures to sanction the reception of Slave evidence, is another instance of prejudice which is much to be regretted. Yet, although these prejudices may be found to exist, and may be lamented when found, it must not be understood that it will be necessary, without pausing, to enforce summary measures, which will only aggravate, instead of palliating the evil, or that it may not be more expedient to apply the slow, but sure, moral power of reason and argument. But, however strong these prejudices, if the accusation, that “the often-repeated and “often-refuted pretence of actual improvements” in the West Indies, “is all delusion,” be (as many West Indians, of the first character for honour and integrity, maintain it to be) an *unfounded accusation*,—it must be allowed that the Colonists have some cause for provocation. It certainly is to be regretted that the truth with respect to this accusation cannot be ascertained, *as it is one manifestly susceptible of proof or contradiction*. At the same time it must be remarked, that the Abolitionists do flagrant injustice to their cause, in dwelling so heavily on the subject of the op-

pression incident to Slavery, because such a course would seem to imply that if the oppressive and cruel part of the system were abolished, the evils of slavery, as a system, would be effectually removed. If the most efficient Protectors of Slaves were established in each colony, and if it were enacted in each colony that no Slaves, male or female, should ever again be subjected to any degree of exertion incompatible with the preservation of the best possible health, or with habits of education and moral conduct, would the Abolitionists be content to allow the continuance of slavery as a state, subject to this important melioration? In other words, will they sanction a state of regulated coercion, as an intermediate state between slavery and freedom? If they will not, why do they lay such a constant stress on this part of the subject, which is calculated so essentially to goad and wound the feelings of the colonists, especially of that far greater proportion of them who are conscious that, with respect to themselves and to their management of their Slaves, the accusations of cruelty and oppression are utterly unmerited? That eight hundred thousand individuals can be held in slavery, without occasional acts of severity, is a moral impossibility; but the inference is not correct, that, because these evils are inseparable from the system, they are universal, or even general in their application.

The West Indians contend, with entire con-



fidence, and challenge inquiry, in the most peremptory manner, as to the fact—that not only are the Negroes better fed and more mildly treated, but that they are benefited in “innumerable other particulars, which” (to use the words of Mr. Wilberforce, quoted in page 29) “an act of Assembly could neither specify nor enforce.” On the other hand, much misconception exists on this subject among some of the members of the West India body. Some of them imagine, that the Order in Council for Trinidad was founded upon an impression that the state of Slavery in the West Indies was universally a state of misery and privation. They contend, that if that impression were removed, there would be no pretext for the adoption of the provisions contained in that order; and therefore they recommend the most extensive and conclusive inquiry into the physical state of the Negroes, *for that object*. But in this point of view, they confound the physical with the moral condition of the Slaves. With respect to their physical condition, it may be true that they are, in general, not only better fed and more mildly treated, but benefited in “innumerable other particulars,” &c. &c. But if this were admitted, to the utmost extent, it would afford no argument against the measures which have been adopted in execution of the Resolutions of the House of Commons. Those Resolutions contemplated “that *progressive im-*

*“provement in the character of the Slave Population,”* which might *“prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of His Majesty’s subjects:”* and how is it possible to suppose that, if the fact were established that the Slaves are well fed, well clothed, well housed, and kindly treated, that there would be no necessity for *preparing them* for that state of freedom which the Resolutions propose that they should be fitted ultimately to enjoy? Admitting that the Slaves are in the best possible physical condition, why is it less expedient to adopt the suggestions in the Trinidad Order in Council? Why, because they are well fed, well clothed, well housed, and kindly treated, is it inexpedient to appoint a Protector—to limit, and ultimately to supersede, Sunday markets; to prohibit their labouring on Sunday for the exclusive benefit of their masters? Why is it inexpedient, under these circumstances, to forbid the carrying of the whip into the field; to regulate the punishment of males; and to substitute certain punishments for females, in lieu of those which previously existed? Why is it inexpedient to keep a record of punishments; to enact penalties for illegal punishment; to provide for the marriage of Slaves; to prohibit the separation of families; to establish the right of Slaves to property; to institute savings-banks; to regulate manumissions (taking care to secure to the owner the

real value of his Slave); or, finally, to regulate the circumstances under which a Slave shall be entitled to give evidence on oath in a court of justice? He must be an ingenious person, who would be able to convince the country that these improvements, which are enforced in the Trinidad Order, are unnecessary and inexpedient, by proving the falsehood of the accusations so liberally made, *that the Negroes are badly fed, badly clothed, badly housed, and badly treated.* However, as the appeals made by the Abolitionists to the people, rest materially on the assertion of the misery and privation at this moment experienced by the Negroes, it certainly would be desirable, if it were possible, that such conclusive evidence were brought, either in support or in contradiction of that assertion, as would no longer leave this part of the question in doubt; which doubt, at this period, operates so invidiously and prejudicially against the West India body.

Too strong a protest cannot be entered against any attempt which may be made to wrest from the hands of the Government this great national experiment, founded in justice, and executed hitherto in a spirit of practical and cautious policy, by appeals made to the people against slavery as a system (the truth of which, in the abstract, no person can be found to deny), and by engendering those feelings of horror

and indignation which such appeals are calculated to produce; and too much caution cannot be recommended to those candidates at the next general election, whom it may be attempted to involve in pledges and promises upon this subject, *from which their better judgment will revolt*, when they are called to fulfil them.

The Abolitionists accuse the Planters of severity and unkindness towards their Slaves, and of the exercise of unnecessary coercive authority. That there have been recorded examples of such severity, no person can deny: and that such instances are inseparable from a state of Slavery, it might not be difficult to shew, even in default of recorded examples. But it is impossible to deny that the severity of the Planter has progressively diminished, in proportion as the Slave has advanced from the state of an indignant and rebellious captive, to that of a domiciliated and tranquil bondsman: and even admitting that wherever Slavery exists, severity must be found, is it not demonstrable that the principle by which that severity may be effectually mitigated and ultimately destroyed, is the elevation and improvement of the moral condition of the Slave? If unnecessary severity exist in the West Indies at this moment, it must be remembered that it is the child of the legislation of our own country. We have fostered, encouraged, and maintained,



in every conceivable manner, the establishment of a state, of which severity and coercion have been indispensable conditions\*.

“ He who allows oppression, shares the crime.”

\* This statement may be illustrated by the following Extract from Mr. Barham’s Pamphlet, entitled “ *Consideration on the Abolition of Negro Slavery, and the means of practically effecting it.*”

“ But is it really so as we have affirmed, that the people of Great Britain are equally liable for the debt. We would now pay to humanity and justice, as the inhabitants of the Colonies and the owners of colonial property ? the question is most important ; and before it can be safely answered, we must inquire how this debt arose, and for whose benefit it was contracted ?

“ That debt arose by the Slave Trade ; and that trade was established by, and for the benefit of, the nation at large.

“ To say that Great Britain formed the plan, and that the Colonies executed it—to say, that Great Britain made the laws, and that the Colonies availed themselves of the laws—would be greatly understating the share, which Great Britain had in the origin of the Slave Trade, and in the consequent system of Slavery that now exists. But many persons have been so used to charge all the odium of that system on those, who by accident happen to be the present owners of Slaves, that they will be surprised to learn how much larger a share Great Britain has had than the Colonies, in the formation, maintenance, and present extent of slavery.

“ The following historical facts will clear up this point a little.

“ Great Britain established the Slave Trade in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who personally took a share in it. “ The Colonies did not then exist.

The only course, therefore, to be pursued by this country, is the adoption of such practical measures

“ Great Britain encouraged it in the successive reigns of Charles I., Charles II., and James II. by every means that could be devised. But it was William III. who outdid them all. With Lord Somers for his minister, he declared the Slave Trade to be ‘ highly beneficial to the nation:’ and that this was not meant merely as beneficial to the nation through the medium of the Colonial prosperity, is demonstrated by the Assiento Treaty in 1713, with which the Colonies had nothing to do ; and in which Great Britain binds herself to supply 144,000 Slaves, at the rate of 4800 per annum to the Spanish Colonies.

“ From that time, till within a few years of the present time, our history is full of the various measures and grants, which passed for the encouragement and protection of the trade.

The Colonies, all this time, took no share in it themselves, merely purchasing what the British Merchants brought them ; and doing therein what the British Government invited them to do, by every means in their power.

So much as to those who created and fostered the trade, and now let us see who it was that first marked it with disapprobation, and sought to confine it within narrower bounds.

as will not supersede injury by injury, but do good by certain, though gradual progression.

The Colonies began in 1760. South Carolina (then a British Colony) passed an act to prohibit further importation;—but

The Colonies, however, in 1765, repeated the offence; and a bill was twice read in the Assembly of Jamaica, for the same purpose of limiting the importation of Slaves;—when

The Colonies, in 1774, tried once more; and the Assembly of Jamaica actually passed two bills to restrict the trade;—but

The Colonies, by the Agent of Jamaica, remonstrated against that report, and pleaded against it, on all the grounds of justice and humanity;—but

Great Britain rejected this act with indignation, and declared that the Slave Trade was beneficial and necessary to the mother-country. The Governor, who passed it, was reprimanded; and a circular was sent to all other Governors, warning them against a similar offence.

Great Britain stopped it, through the Governor of that island, who sent for the Assembly, and told them, that consistently with his instructions, he could not give his assent; upon which the bill was dropped.

Great Britain again resisted the restriction. Bristol and Liverpool petitioned against it. The matter was referred to the Board of Trade, and that Board reported against it.

Great Britain, by the mouth of the Earl of Dartmouth, then President of the Board, answered by the following declaration: “We cannot allow the Colonies to check or discourage, in any degree, a traffic so beneficial to the nation.” And this was in 1774!

Such are the statements and reasonings which appear to belong to a practical consideration of the West India Question. It will be for the public to judge whether they are not sanctioned by common sense and by the experience of history, and above all, whether they are not reconcilable with the true and genuine spirit of the Resolutions of the House of Commons.

It is presumed, after this, not many persons will be disposed to contend, that Great Britain has not had at least an equal share in establishing slavery with those who happen now to be the actual owners of Slaves.

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APPENDIX.



## A P P E N D I X A.

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THE following Table will strikingly exhibit the different results of free and slave labour in Hayti.

The first column shews the nature and quantity of the productions exported from the *French part* of St. Domingo to *France*, in the year 1789, when labour was performed by Slaves.

The second column shews the productions exported from *the same part of the island*, to *all parts of the world*, in 1800, under the military government of Toussaint Louverture.

The third column shews the articles exported from the *whole island*, to *all parts of the world*, in 1822, under the Presidency of General Boyer.

The remaining columns shew the value of the articles exported in these different periods.

## COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS of PRODUCE exported

NATURE OF THE GOODS AND PRODUCE EXPORTED.	Quantity of the Articles exported from the French Part of St. Domingo to France, in the Year 1789, accord- ing to the Official Accounts of <i>M. Proissy.</i>	Quantity of the Articles exported from the French Part of St. Domingo to all Parts of the World, in the Year 1800, according to the Official Accounts of <i>M. Bizouard.</i>	Quantity of the Articles exported from both the French and Spanish Parts of St. Domingo now called Hayti, to all Parts of the World, in the Year 1822, according to the Official Accounts of <i>M. Inginac.</i>
MUSCOVADO SUGAR lbs. French.	93,573,300	16,705,000	652,541
CLAYED SUGAR . . . . . "	47,516,500	. . . . .	. . . . .
TOPS of Hogshead SUGAR, } or 1st qual. MUSCOVADO } "	. . . . .	28,900	. . . . .
COFFEE . . . . . "	76,835,200	27,747,100	35,117,834
INDIGO . . . . . "	758,600	1,900	. . . . .
COCOA . . . . . "	150,000	94,500	322,145
COTTON . . . . . "	7,004,200	2,341,900	891,950
SYRUP . . . . . barrels	25,749	. . . . .	. . . . .
RUM . . . . . hogsheads	598	. . . . .	. . . . .
HIDES (tanned entire) . . each	9,080	. . . . .	. . . . .
HIDES (in hair) . . . . . each	11,446	. . . . .	. . . . .
LIGNUM VITÆ and } MAHOGANY } supposed lbs.	20,000	. . . . .	20,100
LOGWOOD . . . . . lbs.	. . . . .	. . . . .	3,816,583
BLACK AND COLOURED POPULATION . . . . .	[ In the French Part of St. Do- mingo, in 1789, according to M. de Marbois, Intendant of the Colony . . . . . 467,850. ]		[ In all Hayti, in 1822, according to M. Inginac, 935,335. ]



from ST. DOMINGO, in 1789, 1800, and 1822.

Common Rate of Valuation at the Prices of 1789.	Value of the Articles exported in 1789 to France alone.	Value of the Articles exported in 1800 to all Parts of the World.	Value of the Articles exported in 1822 to all Parts of the World.
	Livres.	Livres.	Livres.
At 45 Livres per quintal . . .	42,107,985	7,553,250	293,643
At 75 Livres        "       . . .	35,637,375	. . . . .	. . . . .
At 55 Livres        "       . . .	. . . . .	15,895	. . . . .
At 110 Livres       "       . . .	84,518,720	30,518,510	38,629,617
At 1,000 Livres       "       . .	7,586,000	19,000	. . . . .
At 80 Livres        "       . . .	120,000	75,600	257,716
At 170 Livres       "       . . .	11,907,140	3,981,230	1,516,315
At 110 Livres per barrel . . .	2,832,390	. . . . .	. . . . .
At 132 Livres per hogshead . .	78,936	. . . . .	. . . . .
At 13 Livres each . . . . .	118,040	. . . . .	. . . . .
At 6 Livres each . . . . .	68,676	. . . . .	. . . . .
Computed at . . . . .	90,000	. . . . .	90,450
Computed from the data of Bryan } Edwards; Vol. III. p. 215 . }	. . . . .	. . . . .	101,775
TOTAL VALUE . . . . .	185,065,262	42,163,485	40,889,516

## APPENDIX B.

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WITH respect to the principles on which this Order in Council was framed, they are detailed with such clearness and eloquence in the speech of Mr. Canning in the commencement of the Session of 1824, that it has been thought preferable to subjoin an extract from that speech, rather than to repeat the explanation in a less perfect manner.

“ The course which government intended to be pursued with respect to the Island of Trinidad, will be shown by reference to an Order in Council, which is to be found among the papers laid on the table.

“ With the permission of the House, I will state to them shortly the different regulations which that Order in Council comprises. The House will have the goodness to compare what is there done with the statement which I made last session, of what ought to be done ; and I think it will appear that none of the points upon which I dwelt, on that occasion, have been neglected.

“ In the first place, it is directed by this Order in Council, that the shocking and unseemly practice of the chastisement of females by the whip shall be entirely abolished. Here, Sir, it is but justice to say, that the abolition of this punishment has also been recommended by the Resolutions of the West India body in this country, in the course of last year. It is also no more than justice to add, that some of the colonies have adopted, some even anticipated, the recommendation. To raise the weaker sex in self-respect, as well as in the esteem of the stronger, is the first step from barbarism to civilization.

“ The Order in Council next abolishes the use of the whip, when applied to males, as a stimulus to labour ;—that wanton

and degrading use of it, which places the Negro Slave on a footing with the cattle of the field. The whip is not to be carried into the field by the driver, nor is it to be borne as a symbol of authority. It is not in any case to be employed summarily;—but it is not, as to males, to be laid aside as an instrument of punishment. The House will see that it is quite a different thing, when brandished as a symbol of authority, and applied to the brute nerves of the Negro as an incitement to labour: or when used for the infliction of a punishment, of which the reasoning faculties of the Slave can appreciate the justice. Even as to males, and as an instrument of punishment, the whip is to be employed only under certain regulations, both with respect to the amount of infliction, and to the time. Delay of punishment for some time after the commission of the offence is the best security against abuse from the suddenness of passion. It is further provided that witnesses shall be present at the punishment of a Slave; and that all punishments shall be accurately recorded. These alterations at once raise the mass of the Negro population from the brute state to that of man.

“ To provide the means of religious instruction and worship is an object first indeed in importance, but necessarily subsequent in order to those which I have already mentioned; because it is not till the Slave population are raised in the scale of nature that they can be capable of comprehending, or fitted to receive, the blessings of Christianity. It is intended to increase the amount, and widen the basis of the ecclesiastical establishment in the West Indies. That establishment was founded for the benefit of the white population alone. It was no more calculated for the Negro than for the brute animal that shares his toils. I am not stating this as a matter of charge, but as a matter of fact. This establishment, though founded on the principles of the national church, will not exclude other denominations of Christians. The authority and the discipline of the national church will be lodged in bishops.

to be resident in the colonies. With religious worship will be combined religious instruction. It is not my business on the present occasion to trouble the House with details ; but here, again, I am bound to do justice to the West India body in this country, who have declared their anxiety for the institution of religious instruction, and to more than one of the colonies which have already acted upon that declaration.

“ Sir, after religious worship and religious instruction, naturally come those charities of life, which religion promotes and sanctifies. The Order in Council enjoins the local government of Trinidad to encourage marriage. This injunction, I am again bound to say, and I do so with much satisfaction, is in perfect consonance with the recommendation of the persons most interested in the colonies who reside in this country, and has also received a ready assent in many of the colonies. In consideration of marriage, and of the other charities of life, which grow out of that connexion, it is provided by the Order in Council, that in all future sales—I fear that I must still use that word—families shall not be separated. In transferring slaves from one property to another, care will be taken in future that husband and wife, or reputed husband and wife, and parent and child, shall not be severed from each other.

“ The influence of family ties will naturally beget in the mind of the Slave an increased desire of property. The Order in Council gives the security of law to that possession of property which is at present respected by custom ; and enjoins that measures shall be taken to secure to the Slave the power of bequeathing it at his death. In aid of these provisions it has been thought advisable, (however singular it may appear, that a very late invention of a country far advanced in civilization, should be supposed capable of taking root in a rude society like that of the West Indies,)—it has been thought advisable, I say, to institute a Bank, in which the little savings of Slaves may be accumulated. To the right of enjoyment, and to the power of bequest, secured by law, will be thus added the



further security derived from the over-watching eye of public observation.

“ Sir, when, by measures of this kind, new ideas are infused into the mind of the negro,—when he is lifted from a level with the beast of the field, when he has been allowed to take his stand amongst the human race—

‘ *Cœlumque tueri*

*Jussus, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus;*’

when he has been taught to appreciate the endearments of family connexions, the ties of kindred, and the blessings of property,—when his nature, as well as his condition, has been thus improved,—then comes the fit opportunity for considering a subject, which is surrounded by many practical difficulties—the admissibility of the evidence of Slaves in courts of justice.

“ It would be as wild to say, that the evidence of Slaves should be indiscriminately admitted in all cases, as it would be unjust to exclude it in all cases. In this country, a person in the situation of a Slave,—I do not mean politically, but morally,—an infant, whose mind is not sufficiently expanded to be able to estimate the obligation of an oath, is not permitted to give evidence. It is first ascertained, by examination, that the mind of the infant is in fact so matured, as to be capable of comprehending that obligation. It would be improper to admit the evidence of blacks without a similar guard. It is proposed, therefore, that those persons who are to have the care of instructing the negroes should have power to certify, not with respect to a particular case in which the evidence of a Slave may be wanted, but generally, that such and such Slaves have made such advances in civilization as to be cognizant of the nature of an oath. It is proposed, that a register of such Slaves shall be kept, constituting as it were a privileged class, and presenting (what is the spring of all human action) something like an object of ambition to their fellow-Slaves. Under this arrangement, the competency of a Slave to give evidence

will not be judged by subjecting him at the moment to an examination, probing his intellect to the quick, by questions which he may not be able to comprehend; but it will be known at once, when any individual Slave is proposed as a witness on a trial, whether he is one of that class whose evidence has been certified to be admissible. It is just to state, that under certain qualifications, the evidence of Slaves is already admitted in the courts of justice of Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent's, and I believe St. Christopher's, and Tobago.

“ A natural consequence of the determination to impart religious instruction to the Slaves, will be the abolition of Sunday markets, and of Sunday labour. The Order in Council prescribes this abolition, as soon as the means of religious worship shall be established. It prescribes immediately a restriction of the Sunday market, within certain hours—ultimately, as I have said, its total abolition. In some of the colonies this regulation is already partially anticipated.

“ By this process, and by these degrees may the Slave be gradually fitted for the last grand consummation of benefit, the power of acquiring his freedom. Heretofore the restraints on granting manumissions were extremely numerous; but those are now considerably reduced; several taxes and imposts have been removed in different colonies; and in others a like disposition has been manifested. The Order in Council, however, goes beyond what has been hitherto at all generally practised in the colonies. It ordains that a Negro, who has acquired sufficient property, shall, under certain guards and regulations, therein set forth, be entitled to purchase his own freedom, the freedom of his wife, or that of his children.

“ I have thus, sir, stated to the House the provisions of the Order in Council. I know that, with respect to the last point, namely, the purchase of freedom, great prejudice, great dislike, great apprehension, prevails. I am far from saying, that it is not a perplexing question; but the principle has been admitted to a certain extent in St. Kitt's, and also at Trinidad.

No principle can be considered as impracticable, which has, even in a single instance, been voluntarily admitted in the West Indies. It is astonishing how much good might be done by merely collecting, and bringing to bear on one society, all the beneficial regulations which are scattered through the different colonies. I admit on the one hand, that the existence of such beneficial regulations affords an answer to the general declamation which has been heard about the total neglect and abandonment of the Negroes by West Indian governments and proprietors: but I must on the other hand contend, that the people of this country, who, on account of their distance from the colonies, are compelled to look at them, through the eyes of others, are entitled to consider as good authority for any improvement of which they recommend the introduction, the fact, that what they wish to recommend has been by any one West Indian community already voluntarily adopted."—pp. 10, &c.

THE END.

#### ERRATUM.

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Page 5, line 6 from the bottom, *for* "that part of the body,"  
*read* "some part of the body."



LONDON:  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,  
Northumberland-Court.









# LETTER

TO

ROBERT WILMOT HORTON, ESQ. M.P.

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE  
COLONIAL DEPARTMENT;

CONTAINING

## STRICTURES ON

a Pamphlet entitled

**"The West-India Question practically  
considered."**

---

LONDON:

PRINTED BY ELLERTON AND HENDERSON,  
GOUGH SQUARE.

AND SOLD BY J. HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY.

1826.

*Price Sixpence.*



# LETTER

TO

R. W. HORTON, ESQ.

&c. &c.

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SIR,

IN addressing this letter to you, it is not my intention to express any opinion as to the correctness of those reports which have attributed to your pen the work on which it comments, entitled "The West-India Question practically considered." Supposing these reports to be entirely without foundation, it would remain equally proper to address you on a subject in the due discussion of which your official situation must naturally give you a deep interest.

Agreeing most entirely with the author of that pamphlet, that the West-Indian question is one of deep importance, which "*should be accurately examined, and understood in all its points and bearings,*" I cannot, however, concede to him the necessity, or even the advantage, of sending to the colonies for further information as to the state of Slavery. If the very existence of such a state were not enough to satisfy every rational being of the duty of mitigating and extinguishing it, we have already in our possession abundant information, derived from West-Indian sources, and which the most incredulous West-Indians cannot

dispute, to obviate all doubts on the subject. The point is already conceded by all parties.

The author has thought it right to quote at great length several of the speeches of the Abolitionists during the Slave-trade controversy, in order to fasten upon them a charge of inconsistency. The substance of these speeches he has himself given us in the following passage.

“ They,” the Abolitionists, “ contemplated the average maintenance of the price of Sugar, the main commodity of the West Indies, as compared with its price at the period when the Abolition took place ; and they reasoned (and reasoned most correctly on that hypothesis) to this effect :—If importation be stopped, and if the demand for Sugar increase progressively, the slaves will become so valuable to the West-India proprietors, that, as far as their physical interest is concerned, they will be materially benefited ;—the masters will feel the absolute necessity of promoting the increase of their slaves : the consequence will be a rapid addition to the number of Creoles, and a diminution of any labours, now imposed upon them, which can in any way impede the birth of children ;—and the most efficient means whereby slave population can be increased, will be the institution of marriage, and the cessation of the promiscuous intercourse which now universally prevails among the Negroes. The interest of the planters themselves will combine with circumstances to produce that state of things in which transitions have been made from slavery to freedom in other parts of the world. Slavery will merge into a sort of caste—the *villeins regardant*, the *villeins in gros*—and the copyhold bondmen of early history will find their analogies in the transitions which will take place in the West Indies ; until at last this most desirable object, the termination of slavery as a state, will be effected, by a combination of those progressive causes which will arise out of the very nature of things.” p. 23.

Having no wish to defend the Abolitionists from the author's

charge, I will assume that he has given a fair representation of their views and expectations during the period of the Slave-trade controversy; but as in these anticipations they frankly avow that they have been completely disappointed, there can now be no room for debate on the point, much less any need of the delay which a commission of inquiry would occasion in order to prove their correctness or incorrectness.

But to come to particulars; it is fully admitted that they hoped, for example, that "the consequence of the Abolition would be a rapid addition to the number of Creoles, and a diminution of any labours, now imposed upon them, which could in any way impede the birth of children." But, does any one pretend that this expectation has been realized? We have only to look at the population returns, to the very latest period, in order to see among the slave population of our colonies (even without comprehending the Mauritius, which would greatly enhance the rate of depopulation) an average decrease of human life, amounting to little short of one per cent. per annum.

That there are many benevolent men amongst the planters, I have never entertained a doubt; many, whose slaves are as well treated as, in the general absence of those masters, the deplorable state of law and of manners in the colonies will permit. But what does this prove, except, that, while on some estates the treatment is so good that the slaves may be increasing in number, on others they must be so ill treated as to exhibit, on the whole, a large average decrease of the population? Here, therefore, no necessity can be alleged for the delay which would be occasioned by the proposed "most extensive and conclusive inquiry into the physical state of the Negroes." (p. 103.) Their decrease cannot be denied; and with respect to the causes of it we have only to look at the recent returns from all the colonies, and among others from the Fiscal of Berbice, to satisfy us that no diminution of those labours which tend to "impede the birth of children," so as to produce "a rapid addition to the



“number of Creoles,” has yet taken place. The proof of this fact, therefore, can require no commission of inquiry.

To take another instance: The Abolitionists had founded their hopes of improvement on the persuasion that the colonists would feel that “the most efficient means whereby the population could “be increased would be the institution of marriage, and the cessation of that promiscuous intercourse which prevailed amongst “the Negroes.” But surely a commission of inquiry is not wanted to ascertain whether this hoped-for improvement has been realized. No commission of inquiry can more fully ascertain the point than the returns already made by the colonists to the House of Commons. The real benefits of the marriage institution are still unknown, and the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes still prevails, amongst the Negroes. No West. Indian has attempted to deny these facts. It cannot, therefore, be seriously proposed to send a commission to inquire into their truth.

The anticipations of the Abolitionists on these important and vital points have been wholly frustrated; and yet a large portion of the pamphlet is occupied in holding them up as inconsistent, for not acting as if their hopes had been realized.

Our author quotes from a work of Mr. Stephen, published in 1815, a passage from which he deduces, that the Abolitionists “did look forward to an extinction of slavery in the colonies, “to be accomplished by the same happy means which formerly “put an end to it in England—namely, by a benign, though “insensible, revolution in opinions and manners; by the encouragement of particular manumissions; and the progressive “amelioration of the condition of the slaves, till it should “glide insensibly into general freedom;—they looked, in short, “to an emancipation of which not the slaves, but the masters, “should be the *willing* instruments or authors.”

This passage is brought forward for the purpose of contrasting it with a recent publication of the same writer, in which, after a lapse of eleven years, he is led to express his despair of seeing

any material ameliorations take place, without the interference of Parliament. But I mean not to occupy your time in attempting to establish the consistency of the opinions entertained by Mr. Stephen, or by any other friends of the same cause, at different periods: it is quite immaterial to my purpose. On some points, the change has obviously originated in the total disappointment of their hopes, through the blindness and impolicy and misconduct of the colonists. In others, the Abolitionists may have been in error; and if so, surely it is the part of wisdom to give up opinions when proved to be erroneous. In the paragraph, however, just quoted from Mr. Stephen, I see nothing inconsistent with his present views. The extinction of slavery he naturally expected would follow “the encouragement of particular manumissions, and the progressive amelioration in the condition of the slaves,” (leading to a progressive and rapid increase of their numbers,) until slavery should “glide insensibly into general freedom.” But have these improvements taken place? Were they even thought of by the colonists? By no means. How, then, could the consequences expected to result from them have been realized?

Our author dwells much on the great quantity of fertile but uncultivated land in the colony of Demerara; and he is of opinion, that if the slaves there were set free, they would not be willing to work but at high wages. Taking upon themselves to judge, as they naturally would, of the best means of bettering their own condition, many of them might not be induced, even by high wages, to do much work.—Thus far I agree with him: I would even go beyond him on this head; and would admit that no men, Black or White, slave or free, will be induced to work without a motive. The desire of bettering their condition will doubtless operate on many; *but it is on NECESSITY alone that we can depend for an universal change of habits, either in Whites or in Blacks.*

I further agree with our author in the propriety of being guided by past experience as to the course we should pursue, and

of looking to "that state of things in which transitions have "been made from slavery to freedom in other parts of the "world." The question will thus be relieved of some of its difficulties.

The Abolitionists are said to have entertained an opinion, "that if importation were stopped, and if the demand for Sugar "should increase progressively, the slaves would become so "valuable to the West-India proprietors, that, as far as their "physical interest was concerned, they would be materially "benefited." But, allowing this proposition of theirs to be true, I cannot perceive how it will follow, as our author seems to suppose, by necessary consequence, that "the masters," while obtaining a larger income from their estates, will feel the absolute necessity of promoting the increase of their slaves. The masters in such a case would, obviously, be under no more necessity to attend to their interest, in respect to the increase of population, than would the Demerara slaves be under the necessity of working six days in the week, if their wages were so high as to procure for them all they wanted by working three days. Without doubt, a high price of Sugar would make the planter richer and more independent; and it would enable him, if he chose, to leave the management of his concerns to agents, attorneys, and overseers, paying them liberal salaries. But how such a state of things, though it might enable him either to attend to his business, or to neglect it, at his pleasure, can impose upon him the *necessity* of attending to the increase of his slaves, especially if that attention should interfere with present profit, I am totally at a loss to conjecture. Such a *necessity*, on the contrary, may be clearly shewn to be far more closely connected with low prices and with poverty, than with high prices and wealth\*; and it seems to be agreed, between our author and myself, that *necessity* is the grand expedient for bringing about desirable changes. But I confess I cannot discover how

\* See the Anti-slavery Society's Second Report.

the pressure of this necessity is to arise, in the case of the planter, from an increased demand, high prices, and great profits.

Much light will be thrown on this part of the subject, if it be “practically considered.” The acknowledged *fertility of the soil of Demerara* operates on the planter exactly in the same way as a high price of Sugar would operate on the Colonies generally; and there, if in any of our colonies, one part of the anticipations of the Abolitionists has been realized. “The “slaves,” it was said, “will become so valuable to West-India proprietors, that, as far as their physical interest is concerned, “they will be materially benefited.” But, though this has usually been the case in Demerara, where the value of slaves is much higher than in the other colonies, yet can it be affirmed that the masters have there felt “the absolute necessity of promoting the increase of their slaves?” And has this feeling been indicated by the actual increase of the slave population in that colony?—Quite the contrary. The planters of Demerara are so rich, as not even to be under the necessity of residing there. Owing to the great fertility of their soil, they are enabled to employ attorneys and overseers, to manage, or mismanage, their concerns. But is it at all improbable, that the attorney of an absent proprietor, who gets a commission on the amount of the produce, may wish to raise as large crops as he can, without any very nice calculation of the future and prospective injury to the property which may arise from a diminution of the number, or a deterioration of the health, of the slave population? And if he knows the price of Sugar to be high enough to prevent that course from being unprofitable to the owner, he will have little to fear from his interference or dissatisfaction.

If, then, the progress of population in Demerara does not shew that the high profits of the planter imposes the “*necessity of promoting the increase of the slaves,*” where else are we to look for such an effect? We are to look for it—for there alone we can expect to find it—where a real *necessity* is created. We are to look



for it, not in the most fertile and most profitable of our colonies, but in that which is the poorest and least fertile,—in the Bahama Islands. There, *necessity* produces an increase in the slave population, at about the same rate as it decreases in Demerara; namely, about two and a half per cent. per annum.

In order farther to elucidate this subject, I will endeavour to shew how these two opposite states, of wealth and poverty, operate. For several years, Sugar averaged about 30s. per cwt. in the British market. In many of the colonies, Sugar-planting, at this price, was said to be a losing business. It was not so in Demerara. But what was the state of its slave population? It was decreasing, at the rate of two and a half per cent. annually; although good treatment might, doubtless, have produced an increase of two and a half per cent. there, as in the Bahamas, and in the United States of America, or amongst the Free Blacks of Jamaica, or of Hayti. Good management, therefore, might have made a difference of full five per cent. in the amount of the property in that colony invested in slaves. Taking the value of slaves, on an average, at fifty pounds each—which is perhaps below the price in Demerara—then five per cent. on this sum, is 50s. or about 7s. per cwt. on the seven hundred weight of Sugar estimated to be produced by each slave in Demerara. This loss of slaves, however, is a waste of property which, if the price were not raised so as to remunerate the owner, must have been followed by ruin. If Sugar had fallen 7s. or 10s. per cwt., I can understand how that would have made it necessary for the planter to treat his slaves better and to promote their increase. But if it should have risen 7s. or 10s., such a rise would, on the contrary, enable him still further to neglect his concerns, and to overwork his slaves with impunity.

But, to recur to the extinction of slavery in England, I would ask, whether history records any such process as the author supposes to have taken place there? “When the demand,” he observes, “for the produce of slaves labour increased pro-



“gressively”—and the slaves, therefore, became more valuable to their masters—then commenced a “benign, though insensible revolution, in opinions and manners,” “and an emancipation commenced, of which, not the slaves, but the masters, were the willing instruments or authors.” Was this indeed so? In what page of our history is this miracle recorded? Where are we told that the effects of this “benign and insensible revolution in opinions and manners” were so extraordinary, that, in proportion, as our author seems to argue, to the increased value of the slave was the growing desire of the master to emancipate him; in short, that in proportion to the value of the sacrifice, there was an increased willingness on the part of the masters to make it? If any thing like this can be found in the pages of English history, the Abolitionists will be compelled by necessity to adopt the views promulgated by our author. But if, on the contrary, it appears that men in general in this country were then, what we find them to be in every other country and in every other period, more willing to make a sacrifice the less it costs them, then I can only say, that, whether it be our author or the Abolitionists who have entertained such views, they have been completely in error.

In truth, the Abolitionists have been disappointed in their hopes, not because the price of Sugar has fallen, but because it has been artificially raised by bounties and protecting duties. If the same means had been employed to support slavery in England as are now employed to support it in the colonies, there is no doubt it might still have existed. Bounties and protection might have been made high enough to pay for the cultivation of wheat with the hoe, and under the whip, in this country; and the plough and cattle might have been struggling in the unequal contest, under the effects of monopoly or restriction; and we might at this day have been paying, in consequence of these arrangements, twopence in the shilling more for our bread than we do at present. Absurd and impossible as the supposition of the existence of such a state of things in England may seem,

it is precisely what is now passing in regard to the West and the East Indies. We pay largely to support the hoe and the whip in the West, whilst the cattle and the plough in the East are struggling under the pressure of the unequal contest.

If we look only to the bounty on Sugar, it amounts to nearly 1,200,000*l.* per annum. And for what is this paid? It is paid either to support a system which needs such support, and which would fall of itself without it; or it is thrown away without an object. This sum is not merely paid in support of a system which would fall, as it has done in England, without it; but it pays for the destruction of human life; for the destruction, therefore, of the most valuable part of the national property. If we add the actual decrease of the slave population, in our West-India colonies, to what might be its increase if their masters were really under the *necessity* of treating them well, it would make a difference in the whole of not fewer than 24,000 lives annually; which, at 50*l.* each, will be found to be just about the amount of the bounty, or 1,200,000*l.* per annum. Take this away, and then “will the masters feel the absolute necessity of promoting “the increase of their slaves;” then we may look for a “benign, though insensible, revolution in opinions and manners,” “and to the extinction of slavery in the colonies” “by the “same happy means which put an end to it in England.”

I agree with the author, that the fertile and boundless territory of Demerara ought to claim more attention than it has done. Not one-thousandth part is cultivated, and the rest is therefore of no value. It is of no value for want of population; and without population it never can have value. How, then, is that population to be obtained? Certainly not by the present course, by which, on the contrary, the population must be reduced from 80,000 to only 20,000, in the space of 50 years. The best way is undoubtedly to remove the bounties and protections, and all other obstructions to the mitigation and extinction of slavery. We may then expect an increase in the slave population similar to what is taking place in other countries; and supposing it to increase at

the rate of two and a half per cent. per annum, the present population would, in fifty years, amount to 240,000. Nor would this be the whole increase to the population of Demerara; for, supposing the same increase to go on in our other colonies, in a few years some of the smaller islands would have a surplus population: and this increase of numbers would at last compel the planters to yield to *necessity*: they could not afford to hold men in slavery if they had no means of giving them employment, and hence the slaves would be set at liberty. An attachment to the spot which gave them birth would at first make the slaves willing to work for low wages rather than quit it. They would be ready, however, like the surplus population of Ireland, to go to the neighbouring islands to help in crop time; and when the planter could thus get help in that busy time, he could do with fewer hands; and he would then be induced to introduce the plough and other machines, which, whilst he has all his hands, as now, to keep and to employ during the whole year, are attended with comparatively little advantage. Our author will find that it is in this way the plough, so long recommended in vain, will eventually be introduced into the colonies.

The amelioration in the treatment of the slaves, consequent on the meditated improvements in their condition, and especially on the removal of the bounty and protecting duty, would soon render it unnecessary to keep up our present armies and establishments in the West Indies; and we should thus effect a large annual saving, of probably 800,000*l.* in addition to the 1,200,000*l.* of bounty. Under such a system, our slave population must increase; and, if it increased at the rate of two and a half per cent. per annum, in fifty years fully 1,300,000 would be added to its amount. Of these we may reasonably compute that, in addition to those born in Demerara, vast numbers would migrate thither in search of employment; and such as might do so would, of course, be free men trained to labour by necessity. On such a plan how much more rapidly and cheaply would this fine and fertile country be peopled and made of value, than it could be even by

the renewal of the Slave Trade, supposing that, for a moment, to be possible? From 1790 to the time of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1808, it is calculated that two slaves were imported into Jamaica for one permanently added to its population. For the 190,000 therefore imported in that time, a real increase of only 95,000 took place. If, then, we value the imported slaves at 50*l.* each, we shall find it would cost 130,000,000*l.* to add 1,300,000 slaves to the population of our colonies. No man would recommend this costly mode of peopling them, even if we were to put humanity out of the question. The best, therefore, and indeed the only rational, means of peopling and cultivating Demerara, an object which our author seems to have very near his heart, is to allow the natural course of things to operate in that as well as in all our other colonies. A free population will gradually rise up in our islands, to whom *necessity* will teach industrious habits; and as these will emigrate in search of employment to countries of greater extent and greater fertility, no place can offer stronger inducements in this respect than Demerara. Whenever this question shall be “practically considered” by the parties most interested, they will surely cease so obstinately to oppose manumissions, for which the price is to be paid; and will turn their attention to that loss of Negro life which is now diminishing the number of their slaves with far greater rapidity than can ever be effected by allowing them to purchase their own freedom.

The Abolitionists are accused of feeling more for the slaves than for the planters. But if they should have thought more of that class which outnumbers the other by about 400 to one; of that class who are unable to vindicate their own rights; of that class towards whom this country has sanctioned the darkest injustice, whom we have forcibly held in degradation and ignorance, to whom, therefore, we owe a debt which all our exertions will never be able to discharge—if they should have thought more of these, than of their masters, they may be forgiven: it



was both natural and just that they should do so. They never can consent to place the mere pecuniary interests of a few individuals on a level with the bodily privations and sufferings, the mental degradation, and the moral blindness "of hundreds of thousands," of their fellow-creatures; in short, with all the crime, and all the wretchedness of colonial bondage.

It is now the declared and universal feeling of the people of England, that the slaves are entitled to their freedom as soon as it can be given with advantage to themselves; that they have a just and indisputable claim on those who have sanctioned their being held, and on those who have held them, in their present state of degradation, to do every thing which may be required to fit them for freedom. As for the amount of compensation claimed by their masters, that is no concern of theirs; that must be settled between the people of England and the planters: but I most fully agree with the author of this pamphlet, that the mere amelioration of their treatment can furnish no ground whatever on which to demand compensation.

If, then, we would make past experience, as he proposes, the ground-work of our plans and the measure of our expectations, we ought, in the first place, to remove every obstruction "to an extinction of slavery in the colonies, to be accomplished by the same happy means which put an end to it in England." We ought to do so, especially, "by the encouragement of particular manumissions, and the progressive amelioration in the condition of the slaves," by their moral and religious culture, by their legal protection and effectual security against oppression, and by such other means as experience may point out to be practicable and expedient; and all this with a view, mainly, if not exclusively, to the advantage of the slaves, and to their early emancipation. And to this consummation the more rapid is our progression, the better will it be for all parties. Thus much the poor Negroes are fairly entitled to claim from us; and if, in the pursuit and accomplishment of these paramount objects, any injury is done to the property of the planters, their claim



will attach upon the country, and not upon the slaves; and when it has been established, let it be fairly and liberally met. At the same time, I am free to confess, that if, by raising the slave population of our Colonies to the condition of free labourers, injury should arise to any party, such a result would be a novelty in the history of mankind.

There are various other points in this pamphlet which I wholly omit the mention of; both because they would lead to an inconvenient length of discussion, and because many of the fallacies and mistatements which it contains are so palpable as to require no refutation, whilst others have been triumphantly anticipated in the works already published by the Anti-Slavery Society, particularly in its Second Report, and at the close of a recent pamphlet, entitled "The Progress of Colonial Reform."





# COLONIAL CRISIS.

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FIRST LETTER

TO

R. F. BUXTON, ESQ., M.P.

BY

CHRISTOPHER CLAXTON.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JAMES COCHRANE AND CO.,

11, WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL.

1831.

*Price One Shilling and Sixpence.*





## PREFATORY NOTE.

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Bristol, Sept. 1, 1831.

SIR,

IN the Colonies, I left excitement, alarm, and despair, brought to a crisis by the threats of His Majesty's Ministers, in following up your last motion against the West India proprietors.

In England, I find ruin, not only among the West India merchants, but ruin, either accomplished or in progress, in almost the whole commercial system.

The West India question is said to be at an end. The Ministers, it is said, will listen to nothing, and your party have gained their point. Every branch of trade has yet to find how much worse it may be ; many indeed are already alarmed at the paucity of orders. Credit is destroyed, and, even if more grievous failures do not take place speedily, a year or two will prove that not one tithe of the amount of last year's manufactures will be ordered for the Colonies.

All advance is at an end ; all bills will be protested, and the very articles that are necessary to take off the coming crop will be withheld by the proprietor resident in England. Most of these, with even great means in England, are either reducing their establishments or preparing for a change. The Government has freed its Negroes ; your party will make a parade of it, and England will be gulled. Unless they constantly labour on an estate, on one estate, and keep up its cul-

tivation at a reasonable ratio, provide for their own young and old, and restrain their own worthless, manumitting them proves nothing. Those of Antigua, no doubt, are tradesmen who can earn sufficient in one day for the week. At Barbice, Tortola, and every where else, there are no field-labourers, or only such as labour for their own provisions one day in the week, or so very few, and those so inconstant and uncertain as to bear against the point of Free Labour. It will soon be settled that 1836 will be the year fixed for granting the boon. Dr. Lushington best knows how far his letters to his coloured friends bear me out in the assertion: notwithstanding which I do not believe it; I still hope for temperate and considerate, just, fair, and reasonable proceedings.

In one chartered island, by implication the Government is voted a curse instead of a blessing; in another, the ties of allegiance are declared to be dissolved; in a third, resistance of oppression, and a manly defence of property is pronounced; and in a fourth, amid devoted expressions of attachment and loyalty, the Colonists declare themselves driven to despair, and compelled to appeal to the nation at large; and all this through the persevering measures of your party, who have done their worst. The Colonists in some islands are driven to extremities by sheer alarm, absolute fear. The Negroes have *begun to demand*, and those who know their nature will tell you their state from that alone. The Planters are not without information from the better Negroes, who are as much alarmed as themselves, and who in many instances, I can prove, look forward first to the consumption of all the cattle and stock, and then the destruction of the Whites. The mere managers are nervous and timid, sneered at by the slaves, and, in the event of a row, will add to the confusion.

You may smile at the stand the Colonists are making; but gentlemen are on their way to England who will tell you, if Government continue their threats, the Planters would rather be stabbed by a clean bayonet than have their throats cut by a dirty bill-hook; and force must be used if further invasion of private property, without compensation, is to take place. Resistance is not to be anticipated; but the landing of a regiment to coerce the masters will

lead to universal uproar and bloodshed, and the unfortunate slaves will be the victims.

Notwithstanding all which, every thing may be repaired, and, by a wise Colonial system, the Colonies gradually recover from their distress, the revenue continue unimpaired, and, in my humble views, the great boon granted within the time you yourself admitted, in 1823, to be reasonable to expect it—thirty years.

If the Slave-trade is stopped, through which the Parliamentary Papers will inform you 52,000 people in nine months were landed in Brazil, and 10,000 in one year in Cuba, and to my knowledge 15,000 in the French islands and others;—if a bounty of £145,000 be given upon the overplus of the refiner;—if the crushed lumps, on fair terms, be admitted into Russia, which only wants the asking;—if the vast competition among the refiners for underselling one another, which, whenever there is an overplus, must act against the Planter, be not farther encouraged by admitting the annually increasing Slave-trading Colonies to ruin the British West Indians through the refiner;—if the consumption of the staple production generally be increased by a reasonable and wholesome reduction of duty;—if the minds of the slave and the master be even proportionably settled by a definitive arrangement; and if your party will really be humane and charitable, all may be achieved and slavery abolished.

The following pages were written with this object; and notwithstanding the wretched prospect, the despair, the want of energy around me, the destruction yet to be apprehended, I am full of hope that a brighter day will dawn, and do not despond in obtaining even your assistance in dispelling the mist that now overshadows our Colonial hemisphere.

I am, Sir,

&c. &c.

C. C.



## FIRST LETTER.

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At Sea, between July 25 and August 5, 1831.

SIR,

THE motives which influence me in addressing you will make themselves sufficiently obvious before you have waded through the first half-dozen pages of this letter, where you will discover that I bring to the almost-worn-threadbare subject of Slavery in our Sugar Colonies opinions drawn from recent, anxious, and deliberate inquiries in the Leeward Islands, and which, in some few respects, are in accordance with those recently put forth from the House of Commons by yourself, as the organ of your party.

Think not, Sir, that I have any hope of being able to overcome the deep-rooted antipathies of that party against the Colonists; I might as well expect (as I have somewhere read) that neither your humane friend Dr. Lushington, or yourself, would eat beef after witnessing the cruelties of Smithfield; old Mr. Stephen cease persecuting the class among whom he laid the foundation of his fortune; or young Mr. Stephen, in these times, be sent forth from the Colonial Office. But it may just be possible, that truth, in however homely a garb, may have some effect on the less bigoted friends of humanity, who are more disposed to be the allies than the positive foes of the West Indians.



Where the meed of praise is due, where good results are apparent, or have struck me as being so, I am not the person to withhold my opinions, even when favourable to your party; although I acknowledge the inclination is strong upon me to vituperate them *for the manner* in which favourable results have been brought about—for the infliction of injury more than commensurate, positively overbalancing every beneficial effect, of which their assiduity and perseverance may be deemed partial causes.

My sympathies are as much engaged on the White as on the Black side of the question. In observing upon your proceedings therefore, it may be just possible I shall not succeed in writing with all the temper I desire; and if I do now and then deal in unpalatable philippics, you must consider them as resulting from your public speeches, your sayings in the Senate, and your doings on public occasions, whether in the City of London Tavern before dinner, or in that or other hotels after dinner; whether surrounded on the outside by hired, placarded "*Am not I too*" Mauri in the morning, or partaking of "creature comforts" with other pseudo-pious St. Stephenish Christians, with mimes or more of your black brethren, of all nations and any or no religion, in the evening, on the inside. I have no more knowledge of your private character than I have of your person. For aught I know to the contrary you may really be an angel, dazzling to the sight, and wearing wider wings than Gabriel wore; or like his Tartarean majesty, your forehead may be surmounted with horns; you may walk on cloven feet, and your waist may be begirt with seven times more coils of tail than even he is represented with in his recent galopades through the City of London.

Fully aware how transient is the impression made by general remarks, I shall endeavour, as much as possible, to confine myself to those particular points which I mean to bring forward as illustrations of my reasons for according with that part of your general assertions which sets down Slavery in Sugar Colonies as against (or, according to my ideas, more than in other cultivation against) increase of population; and I trust in such a way as shall carry conviction to the

mind of every honest West Indian, who may otherwise be surprised to find one of their advocates "*junctis manibus*," in any way, with one of the leading "*patres conscripti*," inimical to their interests.

In America, I understood that the lands on the sea-coast, in the Carolinas, Virginia, &c. had ceased to return such an equivalent for cultivation as to make them worth retaining, (for business only,) with any thing amounting to large gangs of Negroes ; probably from the deficiency of those large supplies of manure actually necessary to prevent exhaustion in any but swampy or malaria situations, in that thinly peopled country, where few grass fields or tracts of meadows, except in small portions near the towns, or in the immediate vicinity of the houses, are required, or suffered to find a place. The increase of Sugar Estates on the Louisiana banks of the Mississippi, and the constant moving *aback* of the inhabitants, (to say nothing of the new settlers in the immeasurable uncultivated tracts of that vast republic,) have caused such a demand for Slaves, that it has become a business to breed for sale, in which occupation large proportions of labour are remitted ; which, even in the cultivation of cotton, corn, or tobacco, prevented the same returns, which I presume are the result of quiet, care, and extreme attention in preventing prostitution and adultery. God forbid the Negroes of Great Britain should ever owe their increase, their *improvement in morals*, to such interested causes.

The regular, the invariable demand upon time ; the monotony of the same ; the punishment where (as it ought) missing muster does, or the fear of it where it is likely to, or where it is certain of occurring, it may easily be conceived, may cause a despondency, a sulkiness, fatal to procreation in young females, at the very age they are disposed to be idle and frolicsome. Also may compulsive labour, after nights of irregularity, to which, as I shall by and by prove, the Negroes generally are prone,—or after indisposition, so slight as not always to be admitted on complaint,—or under natural and debilitating visitations, to which females are subject,—be abstracting causes from those physical powers which nature requires for its own multiplying purposes, and which all

history proves is greatest where the will, and thence the generative faculty, lays under least constraint.

Where masters imagine, as some do, encouragement of matrimony a sinful instead of a praiseworthy act, by reason of the generality of Negroes thinking plurality no crime, and that even being joined in wedlock by the "*Methodishers*" is no sacred compact that may not be broken, it will be only a waste of time, and insulting to your comprehension, to point out in how many ways it must act as a check against any great increase of population among a race prone to sensuality, where the thermometer's range is between 80 and 90 of Fahrenheit.

The African Negroes, and of course their descendants, are more or less well versed in a knowledge of compounding peculiar herbs into a medicine which touches the constitution without destroying it. They are adepts at concocting love-poisons, when suspicious of infidelity, or inflated with desire. They are curious, too, in mixing drugs that, however slow, are not the less fatally sure in their operation; and when all the medical skill of the faculty—of men brought up in the Hospitals of London, or the Colleges of Edinburgh and Dublin, has failed in removing diseases to which females are liable, an African's mixture frequently has been known to restore health and vigour, and, in many instances I am informed of, in favour of his master's children. It has come under my own knowledge, derived from the young women themselves—and, if necessary, I have owners at hand who can corroborate the assertion—an assertion of a fact, of which I have reason to believe many Planters are profoundly ignorant, and would even be incredulous—that upon many estates when females, particularly young ones, prove with child, they disguise the fact as long as possible, and continue their labour in the field when nature requires relaxation, when they know, if they acquainted any of the family of their master, the declaration would be followed by a withdrawal from work. It will be admitted the reasons for their silence must be potent—as potent as the drugs with which they fear being drenched by some of the working part of the gang, to force miscar-



riage or cause abortion, for no other reason than the idea that the abstraction of a fellow-labourer causes more work for the remainder. This, taken in every point, is as great a preventive to increase as it is an auxiliary to premature decrease, and is, doubtless, another ill effect of the system, to be added to a long list in my possession, of the most dreadful murders by poison, even of tender infants, all arising from the same, which it is very far from my intention to defend; while laying before you, in the course of this address, such reasons as amount in my own mind to conviction, and as will prove to the most sceptical, that in most cases the master is not, in the remotest degree, answerable for the non-increase of his slaves; that the decrease, where there is one, arises more from the irregularities and evil propensities of the majority of the slaves themselves than from the system.

You, for the first time, have cloaked your design against the owner under the semblance of moderation. It is obvious, nevertheless, that there is but a slight difference between “death *by the whip*, and death *through the fear of it*.” Notwithstanding the manner in which you have laid all to the system and not to the master, yet I much doubt if you did not feel satisfied, that as much cruel *matter* would be laid to his charge by your party as heretofore. Hence arises another object; and I trust I shall be able to offer sufficient proof that, generally speaking, he is humane and considerate, and that when he is not so, the Negroes have the protection of as sufficient and efficient a magistracy as our own manufacturing or labouring classes in the country. I think I may say more so; for, to say nothing of watchful governors, through your attacks there is rather a searching for, than an avoidance of, causes of complaint; and I apprehend that it would be difficult to find upon the Bench persons totally uninterested in decisions regarding them, in the districts or vicinage of the classes I have alluded to in England.

Upon the question, it appears to me, the leaders of your party are the appendix of reference for the King’s Ministers. Hence it is that I appeal to you, and shall endeavour to point out such errata as, in my humble view, seem to re-

quire correction, and may, by possibility, induce you to advise the adoption of moderate and conciliatory measures in regard to those portions of His Majesty's dominions, to the total annihilation of all property in, or all revenue from, which coercive proceedings assuredly will tend.

To prevent misapprehension, it is full time to acquaint you that I have no opinion of your philanthropy. From an attentive scrutiny of your public speeches, the impression on my mind is, that if you originally came to the consideration of the question under impulses derived from its unalloyed dominion, it has been so transmuted by the legerdemain of your associates, so perverted by their chicanery, so altered by the habit of blindly dwelling only on one side, as to have degenerated into something too base and impure to be classed under the principle that governed him, "who trod an open but unfrequented path to immortality in the ardent and unremitted exercise of Christian Charity."\* As to public character, the same scrutiny has only added one more to the mass of received opinions on that point, for you cannot, after the bad faith you have kept with the Colonists, complain at being classed among the host of

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"those juggling fiends  
Who palter with us in a double sense,  
Who keep the word of promise to the ear,  
But break it to the hope."

Setting aside the abandoned few of this class, who, either in the Colonies or at home, for place, pay, reward, or the hope of preferment, are of you, or anxious to become so, none of the party, for whom you are the "senatûs princeps," are sufficiently aware of the real state of society in the Colonies to authorize the dictation of any line of proceeding, that should have either effect or influence on British statesmen.

The missionaries of the veridical order (the Wesleyan) are paid for the purpose of deceiving you, and the few renegades from, as well as the turncoats in, the Colonies, either wilfully adopt the same course or you have advanced mistatements, per-

\* Vide Howard's monument, St. Paul's.



verted facts, or withheld that which is worse than fabrication—an absolute knowledge of circumstances which would have assisted Ministers and others to have formed fair opinions, to have arrived at just conclusions. Perfidious is the most trifling term I can apply to such conduct from one of the “*patres conscripti*,” on a question of property of the most vital importance to every owner of an acre or a house in Great Britain. I incline, however, to the former opinion as the most charitable, and from the belief that apostates to that religious love that attaches to the land of nativity would not be very scrupulous in deceiving those who have helped to render them infamous. These men know their importance will vanish with the settlement of the question which will end their avocation: this will be succeeded by reflection; that followed by the tortures of their own consciences, always rendered ten times more poignant by inactivity. As to forming an accurate judgment of the state of society in the Colonies, our greatest statesmen have pronounced it most difficult even to comprehend. It cannot be learnt by intuition, although the self-styled pious faction think otherwise. We may, Sir, know the length and breadth, the form of government, number of inhabitants, the statistics, of any country from the works of writers; but who, suddenly transported to Valparaiso or Lima, Mexico or Angostura, although they had Humboldt and Hall by heart, would recognise, even in their persons, the people with whose *habits* he thought himself familiar? How infinitely more does this apply to Slave Colonies, particularly as connected with a projected fundamental change the greatest possible to conceive, which is to reverse the order of most things? It is character, Sir, and a full knowledge of past as well as reasonable ideas upon future systems, combined with character, that it is positively disgraceful for those who are plotting the downfall of all classes in the Colonies not to know, and which a casual visit even is not sufficient to attain. The present eminent Attorney-General evidently thinks otherwise: in following up your motion he professes himself, and more than himself—*all his friends*, “perfectly

acquainted with the state of society in the Colonies," aye, even all the *old women* of England, male and female. As well may a man, utterly ignorant of any branch of optics, say he could give lectures upon the formation of the achromatic telescope; as well may he assert that he understood why one peculiar lens was better adapted than another for concentrating or diffusing rays of light. All the old women indeed!!!

*Old Woman.*—Ah! Tom, dear Tom, I'm glad you're at home again; now tell me, where have you been?

*Son.*—To the West Indies, mother.

*Old Woman.*—Well, only think; that will be far away among the Niggers: and what did you see, Tom?

*Son.*—Flying fish, mother.

*Old Woman.*—No, no, Tom, that wont do—you may have seen old Niggers ground in windmills, and young Niggers cooked for supper—you may have seen rivers of rum, and mountains of sugar; but I never will believe you have seen fishes that could fly.

Some old women, in very high places, call Demerara an island; one young old-one talked of Bolivar as though he was a freed black: with about as much reason they might talk of any gentleman from Quebec, Halifax, or Montreal, as though he had been a Chicktaw, Cherokee, Creek, or Esquimaux. It is the inability of judging the real merits of the question by such as Sir Thomas Denman—the prominent, the learned, the influential of your society, or the indignities, resulting from that inability, which have been heaped upon those whose first duty it is to protect their constituents, to guard against imprudent encroachments on their rights, to be assured of the decided benefit of all the recommendations by the manner of their working in the Crown Colonies, before passing them into laws, *the Colonial Legislative Assemblies* that has prevented the substitution of a better in the place of that feeling hitherto confined to their natural enemies—your society, which is fast becoming virulently bitter toward it, through the unconstitutional threats recently proclaimed by members of that Government, on whose wisdom

and justice they have hitherto firmly relied. If fear or self-preservation does not cause desertion and abandonment\* of property, and the boon is granted without the horrid anticipations engendered by the former being realized ; this feeling, if it be not corrected by wise enactments, will have the fullest possible effect *in retarding amelioration of the mind*. As genius cannot be created by man, neither can the mind display any thing approaching to adornment without instruction. As the former may be developed by man's agency, so must instruction, even with those whose lots are cast in high places, who dwell among the initiated from their youth up in the principles of revealed religion, who live, who come to maturity under, who understand the blessings of *a great light shining on them*, and who have no superstitions that ought to be eradicated, precede the latter. But among the uninitiated in Christianity, with only Pagan idolaters to appeal to, who are even now influenced by the Obeah superstitions or fancied witchcraft of wretches—the compounders and dispensers of the rankest poisons, who will fatten and thrive by uninterruptedly working on their fears, you may as well expect to obtain pompions from oaks, as that religion will not retrograde, and ignorance be perpetuated for an indefinite period. You may go on, Sir, in your career of apparent triumph ; you may succeed in prematurely telling the Negroes they are free ; but what will be your feeling if the plunder of the master, through your agency, be followed by a *brutal misuse* of what under *other circumstances may prove a blessing* ? Tell me not, Sir, of nothing being done in eight years. What has been done is little short of miraculous ; and it is little in favour of your sagacity, that you have allowed yourself to become the mouth-piece in the British House of Commons of a class, or part of a class of persons, who, in crusading against the Colonists, have reiterated again and again for the last twelve months, in every corner of the kingdom, every one of the assertions with which you prefaced your motion. When Members of Parliament follow on such a

\* Hundreds are fast becoming citizens of America, and thousands more would fly if they had the means.



vital question, instead of directing the puritanical leaders of the mob, adopt their opinions, and act on their suggestions, instead of basing their own proceedings on conclusions deliberately matured—the results of sound and temperate arguments on Colonial policy; when the worst of passions are at work, and party animosity is fast merging into personal hatred between man and man, who, throwing conviction to the winds, are wrestling for mere victory; when, above all, evangelical cant and fanatical twaddle has become so fashionable, that amongst the professors are to be found the influential and the powerful; well may we tremble for “ships, colonies, and commerce,” the loss of which, by the same rapid strides that have led to her greatness, may be followed by our country’s downfall. Hitherto they have so improved her model, so increased her power, that she has become a wonder. Hitherto, with integrity at the helm and justice at the prow, manned by a gallant crew, although assailed in succession by gales from every quarter, every beacon unfriendly, every light obscured to her, although buffeted by blasts, *still she kept her reach*. When attacked by all at once, she floundered not; she still kept the even tenour of her way, her true course to greatness. And when the freedom of Europe depended on her; when the bantling she had nursed and reared, that even now only lisps its mother tongue and prates of liberty, joined the oppressor, to hamper, to impede, to crush her and it, gracefully she scattered in harmless spray from her well-rounded bows the angry besetting billows; still she uprose triumphant, buoyant on the wave, a blaze of brilliancy, throwing a bright halo on surrounding nations, illuminating every ocean, herself still Queen of all;—even now she is all *a tanto* the envy of the World. But if false philanthropy shall ride upon the storm and guide the gusts of faction brewing from within; if justice shall desert her post, integrity quit the helm, hypocrisy cut her stays, cant throw her in the wind, and hatred increase her sternway from without; however dangerous was her progress to mightiness, it will be nothing to the perils of her backward pace: her stays gone, her tottering masts would follow by the board; her crew soon exhausted at the pumps, she would become a wreck that

might serve to "point a moral or adorn the tale" of after-ages; who may be reminded of her greatness by the heart-of-oak busts of her Nelsons and her Howes, which, like the beaks of the fleet of the Volscians, may form the trophies or bedeck the rostra of some vast republican or continental forum.

Deep seated are the causes of the virulence of your party; and however obvious the remedies for at least mollifying the same, still it is weakness to expect the voice of reason can obtain a hearing amid the din of faction. In bidding, therefore, adieu to these general (and in this one case nautical) remarks, and in returning to the people, respecting whom your prejudices will, I fear, deem extended patriotic views insufferable, I shall content myself with observing, that do any thing to curtail the boundaries of physical knowledge, to keep the mind in ignorance, many, melancholy, and lasting will be the demoralizing effects thereof you will have to bewail in the islands, where the lands are already so exhausted as to require the constant application of manure, and where there is already a superabundant population, whose only chance of employment depends, and ever will depend, on sugar cultivation.

The discussion of the matter, and the pains that have been taken to unsettle the Negroes, has been as infinitely detrimental to them as it has been injurious to all his Majesty's subjects on the western side of the Atlantic; still as the ally of truth, it has had its effect, and as the pioneer of *inquiry*, it is devoutly to be hoped, for the sake of justice, equity, fairness, and England's good name, it may be permitted constitutionally to elicit it. "Audi alteram partem" is a trite saying, peculiarly consonant to British feeling. What have your fellow-subjects done, that with all your affected moderation, you so blink this almost their last request before their execution, for their condemnation has long since been sealed and settled by your tribunal, the sentence from which it now appears is to be the only fiat of their fate.

When the report of the debate upon the question reached the Colonies, I lost no time in advertizing through all the Colonial papers for returns from any estates in each Colony, with the view of ascertaining in what manner increase or de-



crease was affected by local causes or circumstances, of discovering how particular gangs were affected by importations subsequent to 1800, and previous to the abolition of the Trade in 1807; causes and ages of deaths; numbers of births, and situations of estates as to general health, epidemics, &c. &c. &c.; as much for the purpose of satisfying myself, as of combating the ill effects of such a fact (if it proved to be one) as 45,000 deaths in ten years, upon the public, as of exposing the Machiavelian policy, which, in defiance of truth and justice, could resort to such an outrageous measure to gain their suffrages, if I discovered it was a broad assertion for a particular purpose, and untenable either by proof or argument. I was not long in obtaining returns, although, to save trouble, the majority left me to discover many particulars through the Registrars' offices, which were open to me; but it was not so much the numbers, as the ages and qualities of the sexes I required. Were they Africans? Were they Creoles? Were the women married? Had African men Creole wives? Had African women Creole husbands? How were they married; by their own ideas, the Church, or the Methodists? What was the proportion of miscarriages to births? Did children die more between the birth and ten years of age, or was it, as you have stated, "at ten years began the work of death?" At what age did they go to the field, or was it as you have stated, "then (ten years) began field labour?" Were the estates near towns or garrisons, and what was the effect? Were they, generally speaking, followers of the Church, Moravians, Wesleyans, or people "still in the valley of the shadow of death?" In what estimation did they hold the bond of marriage? Were there any persons suspected of Obeah practices, or who were likely to return to them if uncontrolled by masters? To what age was instruction continued, at what age did it commence, and how many hours of the day was it practised? Were any measures adopted for improving the adults? How much more food was given than the Amelioration Act required, how many hours less labour was performed than the same Act made it legal to exact?\*

\* If this side has a reverse it is provided against by law, and ought to be rigorously observed, except upon such visitations as extreme

These, Sir, were a majority of the points I wished to ascertain, although all of them were not specified in my general advertisement; but I was not backward in inquiries upon these and others on all the estates that offered me facilities and all were open to me. The mass of returns in my possession would cause more expense to publish than I can afford; I shall therefore content myself with a summary of the whole, interlarding it with occasional references. Before, however, going generally into these, I will give short answers which I gathered from the whole, applicable to all the foregoing questions; some of which of course must be received as having exceptions, it being difficult among so many, varying testimonies (on only some points, however,) to eke out the preponderating side:—African men always found it difficult to get Creole wives; African women not so difficult to get Creole husbands, particularly where they were imported young. An infinite majority of the paired are unmarried. Marriages by Wesleyan missionaries vastly predominate over those of the Church; which, as compared with the others, are “few and far between.” The Methodists exert themselves to prevent Church marriages.

It is difficult to apportion the deaths of children. By some accounts one-fourth of the females (depending much upon situation) miscarry; upon an average, one-third die in infancy; two children die between one year of age and ten, where one dies between ten and twenty; and at fifteen (not ten) remunerating labour may be said to *commence*. The average number of deaths in ten years, in the Leeward Islands, as near as I can calculate from the returns in my possession, (asked for ten years, but given in all periods between ten and one,) is equal to two hundred in every thousand, in eleven years. I believe it is greater at Demerara, Trinidad, Tobago; but as yet I have no returns from those places or Barbadoes, where I presume it is less.\*

drought and positive scarcity, to which the islands are liable, and which, if it was not for the capitalist, would oblige the Negroes (as it may) to go back to the system of their forefathers—cannibalism.

\* There was not time to receive them; they will be forwarded, and, if important, shall be published.

Negroes cannot be said to return interest for their cost in rearing until they belong to the holers, or great gang; and little Negroes do no other agricultural work, generally speaking, but weeding, until they are in their sixteenth year: few join the great gang before eighteen or twenty. Estates near towns are less prolific than others, and universally the decrease is greatest, for reasons that are obvious.\* A Negro, if you ask him if he is married, and he is so by the church, will say, "Yes, Sir, thank God, Sir, regularly married." If by Wesleyan or Moravian missionaries, "Yes, Sir, but *only* by the Methodishers." *This answers the question of estimation also.* There are many persons not only suspected, but occasionally practising Obeah, notwithstanding the rigour of the law; and there was a man at Nevis, who had roamed at large for years among the Negroes, committing all sorts of crimes and depredations. None of them, although sufferers, dare touch him, for fear of being Obeah'd, although many declared themselves willing to secure him, if their masters would only assure them *he should not escape the gallows.* He was captured after a glaring robbery by two Planters the day I sailed. Obeahism is kept down, more by the anxious watching of the master than by the law against it. It is as fatal to the Negroes' peace and health as if they were actually under the influence of the evil spirits of fiction and romance. What terror fails to accomplish through its dominion on the mind, is effected by means of deleterious drugs on the constitution, as destructive to the happiness and to the lives of the many, as the threats of the Methodists, their denunciations, and turnings out from God's to the Devil's class, to those of the old, the bigoted, the fearful, and the weak.

These parts of the question you have either concealed, or they have never suggested themselves to you, because they offer no opening for an attack upon the Planters or the system: quite the reverse. But what, Sir, think you would be the effect of a general return to such Pagan superstitions, where all are loosed to the free exercise of their fancies, and where no exertion, in long seasons of drought, can command a sufficiency

\* Among the most important, their vicinity to Government Negroes or African apprentices.

of food to prevent starvation? Where there is little capital, and less exchangeable commodity, there can be no supply from without.

The practisers of Obeahism are secretly becoming more numerous. Young people even are under instruction. These will thrive and fatten without an effort; while robbery will increase, and cruelty be called a virtue, in accomplishing their demands, or in fulfilling their behests. The Wesleyan missionaries, too, would fatten and thrive; for their demands, too, robbery would increase. Why, Sir, should they be suffered to disgrace their calling by either selling certificates,\* or accepting money, poultry, or other articles, from the Negroes, as offerings for a return to class, from which they have been driven for, perhaps, looking at a dance,\* or carrying their mistress's clothes to a ball-room door,\* or not turning a child or a grand-child forth from their side, for living without the sacred bond of a Wesleyan marriage with the father of half-a-dozen children,\* whose only idea or knowledge of its being a crime is their having told her so?

While I looked with anxiety for returns from distant parishes and colonies, it will be supposed I was not backward in inquiries immediately surrounding the estate I occupied, (which was one of a range containing four hundred and sixty-six Negroes, a chapel, school, &c., and which I shall be happy to dispose of for the proprietor for half its value,) or those where I happened to visit in my rounds of business or pleasure. And here it will be as well to inform you that, exclusive of occasional visits to Barbadoes and Jamaica, in the course of professional servitude, during the war, I have been employed for eleven consecutive years in visiting the Colonies; sometimes in charge of one of the ships in which I am concerned; sometimes engaged for patentees of apparatus for improving the staple commodities; sometimes as attorney for individuals in England, on estate business; and always, for a long or short period, watching the interests of the shipping concern in which I am engaged. It has seldom happened, of late years, that I have returned by the same vessel that took

\* Fact, Fact, Fact, *meo periculo*.



me out, unless she previously made a clear voyage in the interim of my sojourn in the Colonies: hence, about seven clear months in each year are passed in the West Indies; and it is this going and coming that has enabled me to notice alteration, and remark, more readily, improvement among the Negroes; while the three months in England have given me an opportunity of overlooking (*in ways you wot not of*) the proceedings, and learning the intentions, of your party; thus storing my mind with fresh causes for inquiry, for searching out truth, and controverting falsehood.

Setting aside my constant communication with the estates connected with my shipping concern, and those of others, whose ships my small vessels entirely load, and which estates contain at least twelve thousand Negroes, and from which are annually transported, upon an average, equal to eight thousand hogsheads of sugar, I have been attorney for, or otherwise employed upon, properties from Berbice to St. Kitt's, in (excepting four) all your fourteen colonies, and containing, *at the very least*, eight thousand Negroes. With my mind fully bent upon observation, even when occupied with business, it will be supposed I have had opportunities of gathering information, even if I should have failed in forming a right estimate of the Negro character and the working of the system, either separate or combined. To return from this digression—up to the time of the abolition, in 1807, the Creole women, I find, had an objection to African husbands, although the Creole men were not so scrupulous as to the daughters of Afric; and these naturally preferred the man who had a sheep, a pig, a goat, or well-tilled provision ground, or a good stock of fruit trees, to say nothing of a tolerably furnished cabin, to him who was a stranger in the land, and had all these to obtain or create. Hence the old African Negro of the present day is, comparatively speaking, without progeny; and those who of late years have gone to their fathers, have, in innumerable instances, lived and died without sufficient, or the same, facilities for propagation as their more fortunate fellows, the descendants of those who had been imported half a century before them, or when the shipment of females equalled that of the males. This, however, is far from



so general a rule as not to be subject to many exceptions ; but, even admitting there were liaisons formed on board the vessels that brought them, (extremely unlikely in their state of despondency, of distortion of body—thence wretchedness of mind,) or that they were fortunate enough, on arriving, to obtain a partner imported about the same time ; as the majority were taken in war, and generally had travelled far from the interior to the human-flesh-dealing markets on the rivers ; and, as only the strong and healthy, powerful and vigorous, were of value, it is fair to presume (by calculating for them the ages of all the African Negroes I have conversed with—the presumption amounts to fact) that thirty years was about the average age of those that were imported at the period the Abolition was in agitation, say from 1800 to 1806 or 1807, in which years the last cargoes were received. Universally, I have found them much older persons than Creole negroes, whose ages are tolerably known to be from fifty-five to sixty. I could not, in fact, find one on many estates where it was known sales had been made since 1800, that was not computed to be more than fifty-five years of age, although here and there were a few who landed youths, even previous to 1800.\* I have found many who left children in Africa, from whom they were torn for this barbarous traffic. One woman I know left seven children, and three men I have lately seen left large families. Admitting thirty years of age to have been the average, what, Sir, was there to have prevented females from leaving a dozen children behind them ? As a mere matter of calculation, how would this have its effect on increase or decrease at the present moment ? With wretched mothers, torn from their offspring, with all hope of re-union destroyed, annihilated, by the continued trackless progress over the to them immeasurable expanse, the world of waters—the uncertainty of their fate—the certainty of their own—all desire would for a time be banished, even if the body was

\* On one estate fifty male adults were placed in 1802. All but four that have died, died of old age ; two only are alive and these are aged : the whole fifty have only left *eleven descendants*.

hale enough for nature's purposes; and even with those who were childless and young; the love and loss of country and of friends, the thoughts of home, on which fond memory lingers, increased to poignant misery by compulsive labour, rendered stronger by the dreadful contrast of chains for freedom, would, until time and habit had softened grief of its asperities, prevent the thoughts from dwelling on that which it is impossible to separate from ideas, at least, of joy and bliss. With all, (although it is most forcible when applied to females,) always admitting thirty years the average of the age of importation, had not nine or ten of their generating years been spent in Africa; and will not this have its effect for the next ten years or twenty? Has it not been gradually demonstrating itself, by the increasing deaths of African Negroes without offspring? And has it not passed the Rubicon? Every year there are fewer left to follow. They are now mostly under the care of nurses; and, in ten more years, none but those in second childhood will be left. You will understand that it is from the Negroes themselves I have collected the information (in most cases) that has enabled me (combined and compared with returns, letters, and *vivâ voce* communications with owners, overseers, drivers, and artificers,) to give the foregoing with as much confidence as appears to me necessary for arriving at general ends. I took infinite trouble to get returns from the neighbouring estates of all those for which returns were first sent me, but I could not complete sufficient for my purpose, which was comparison; because it is not at all to be inferred, that so many women on an estate have so many husbands on the same—far from it. Generally speaking, each sex prefers a partner on another property, as it offers great advantages for dissolute practices, which is, perhaps, a main reason for its adoption. The reports upon this I however omit; and, *ceteris paribus*, you must take the few as a criterion by which to judge the many.

In combining causes for increase or decrease, nothing can be more difficult than arriving at accurate conclusions. Wherever the highest degree of moral and religious feeling exists, or wherever the apparent beneficial consequences thereof are prac-

tised, the more constant are the Negroes to connubial ties, and the greater the number of children born from women biassed by the real influence, or influenced by the practice; and, as with all the rest of the world, bond or free, nothing tends so much to prevent propagation as early prostitution, plurality of wives, and thence, as a matter of course, plurality of husbands. As general results, I find wherever the male adults now average forty, and the females fifty-six, there has been an increase of three per annum, or, according to three returns of estates having the first—males, thirty-eight; females, fifty-two: the second—males, forty-one; females, fifty-eight: the third—males, forty-four; females, sixty-two; all adults of forty-six, in five years. *Wherever the sexes are equal*, in some situations there has been an increase of one in three years, in others a decrease of four in six years. On five estates where they may be called equal, there has been a decrease of three in two years. I think I may state them as generally decreasing, except at St. Kitt's; and I have no return for Barbadoes. On one estate of nearly five hundred Negroes there is the extraordinary return of one hundred and fifty-six children under five years; and one hundred and fifteen are under instruction, under fourteen years of age. This is so out of the usual track, that I do not use this property in my calculations.

There are, however, many other causes acting upon decrease, and none of which, to the best of my belief, have before been noticed. On all estates, the instant a female declares herself in the family-way, all field labour or heavy work ceases; but she commences such a round of work on her own account (if she is not kept in sight of the house) as beggars in exertion all the work with the hoe. She turns huckster for that part of the gang comprised among her relations and friends, and thinks nothing of walking six, eight, or ten miles with a load on her head of uncommon weight. She sells it in town, and returns at night with the profits; or sometimes remains to pass it in the way that ladies should not do who love their lords. She repeats the march on the following day, and so on for weeks or months in succession, occasionally diversifying the dull routine of occupation by a

sparring match with a rival in trade on the road, or a quarrel in the market.\*

I am fully aware this will be made to apply as another objection against the system; it will be called the abuse of liberty, resulting from previous restraint: be it what it may, from it follow innumerable miscarriages, averaging, in some situations, one in four of those who have conceived, or so state themselves; rather more in some cases, where they feel they are safe from pernicious drugs and cruel treatment of their fellows; for I have known females twelve, thirteen, and one fourteen months in the family-way, *by their own reckoning*, before the babe was born. On many well-regulated estates, whenever a female is known to be pregnant, she is kept in the yard at light work, or in the balcony, or elsewhere in sight, at needle-work.

Upon an average, there is a dance twice a week, within long or short reach of every gang of Negroes throughout the Islands; and even where it would be considered and is too remote, Negroes of both sexes will walk, and return only just in time to join the turn-out at day-dawn, perhaps half muzzy, perhaps having been injured in a scuffle; and I have witnessed many who have dropped asleep while holding the reins of my horse, almost as they took them in their hand, and who had done no work on that day. The males absent themselves frequently on predatory excursions, (the majority being thieves,) and are often caught and severely beaten when committing depredations. Knowing that complaint of illness will lead to the discovery of crime, they hide injuries until they are attacked by some inflammatory disease which speedily proves fatal within the tropics; or, perhaps they remain with contusions, bruised or fractured limbs, on the ground all night, exposed, with drought upon their tongues and fever in their blood, to the rains or dews, and are next day brought to the sick-house, where, in spite of nursing and medical skill, they are removed only for interment.

\* Casual visitors draw conclusions as to the well doing of the Negroes by counting the number of baskets in the market; they little think that one person carries frequently the day's gathering from the grounds of half a dozen or a dozen Negroes.



Almost universally the estates near the towns, garrisons, and roadsteads decrease more, or do not increase as much as in the remote quarters. The young Negresses are constantly out at nights, when they should be partaking of natural rest, and in too many instances become martyrs to disease, and give way to habits incompatible alike with the work required from them, with generation, or with a lengthened life.

The medical gentlemen of St. Kitt's are using most praiseworthy exertions to improve the hospitals; which it must be acknowledged are, in the old Colonies, behind most of those I have seen in Guiana (perhaps by reason of the paucity of numbers, when compared with the large gangs of Demerara, and Essequibo, and Berbice, as from any other cause): they are actively employed, in getting lying-in wards added to the buildings. St. Kitt's is a dry salubrious island; and if even there the disease known by the name of "jaw-fall" occasionally carries off the infants, a disease arising from the damp and smoke of the Negro huts, and which is common in the Highlands of Scotland and in Ireland, to the houses of whose peasantry the Negro hut is preferable only through the climate, how must it apply to the malaria situations of Berbice, Trinidad, Tobago, and St. Lucia? The same proprietor, a medical gentleman of extensive practice, to whom I am indebted for the above (which is confirmed by others), writes respecting births, "that upon those estates where the gangs are principally Creoles, the mothers are more prolific, and breed faster (particularly where there are no Africans among them), and rear their children better than the Congo women (meaning all Africans) did, for few of them bear now; where they lived with even Creole men, their infants too are positively healthier and more vigorous than are those of the Coast people." On one estate belonging to this gentleman I find 103 Negroes; of whom there are

6 females, past breeding,

6 ——— not breeding,

1 ——— pregnant,

37 children, including all under fifteen years of age.

He has omitted to mention the males, although he has stated that womanhood he sets down at seventeen, therefore

are there females to be calculated between fifteen and seventeen years of age of the remaining fifty. This gang decreases of course, although it will soon increase.

At Nevis, on one property, I find   39 male adults,  
    60 female ditto,  
    53 children.

The children are not in proportion to the above; but this estate, in a most healthy situation, has only increased sixteen in five years.

Third return, from the southward, 58 male adults,  
    62 female ditto,  
    32 children only.

Most of the women are old, and there are eight African men, who have not a child, or a woman as wife; decrease in five years, seven.

Fourth return—Grenada, nearly the same results from the same proportions similarly situated.

Nevis—one estate of 134 Negroes has 80 lineal descendants from one female, and she died this year.

#### IN JAMAICA.

	Male adults.	Female do.	Children.	Increase per annum.
No. 1.	18	34	42	3

Which no doubt would be more, were not nineteen of the female adults above forty years old.

	Male adults.	Female do.	Children.	Increase between 1830 & 1831.	Decrease.
No. 2.	17	34	44	7	—
3.	109	119	—	3	—
4.	46	43	—	—	2

#### THREE ESTATES AND TWO PENS.

	Males.	Females.	Increase between 1828 & 1829.	Decrease.
No. 5.	320	360	5	—

#### FOUR ESTATES—ONE CONCERN.

	Males.	Females.	Increase between 1828 & 1829.	Decrease.
No. 6.	217	202	—	5
			1830.	
7.	24	22		2
8.	26	31	2	—
			1831.	
9.	32	58	4	—

In short, very few of the returns are there that do not bear me out, as to increase and decrease entirely depending on the excess or deficiency of females, and proportionate therewith. The average of females over males, where the parishes in the city of Bristol have most increased, is at least ten per cent. In Antigua, on a property or set of properties, on the 30th September 1824 there were 316 slaves, females 4 per cent. over male adults; there were twenty-seven deaths and ten manumission cases up to 1830—six years: still were there 317 in number, hence 38 of the born were living, being about 2 per cent. per annum, and the deaths were as one in sixty-three, whereas in England, one in forty-three is computed to die annually.

	Males	Females	
Jamaica,	87	85	decrease per ann., 3.
Hague Estate,	82	60	decrease to 1829, 5, } decrease to 1831, 5, } 10 in 3 years.

Let the calculations for Demerara be made upon the last scale, where from the Parliamentary papers I find, in 1830, 38,756 males, 32,624 females, and a decrease will be found a positive consequence.

Nevis—Parris's, thirty-six adult males, forty-three adult females, fifty-three infants and young persons—increasing rapidly.

Symond's—1822, total 202; females at the same ratio as the males; in 1824, there was a decrease, partly owing to manumissions and death of old childless Africans, 192 remained, but the females then preponderating over the males, they increased in two years to 204, or at the rate of three per cent. per annum.

Fifty African males were landed on this property since 1800: there are two alive only, and but few have left children.

I now come to an estate called Stoney Grove, which affords a clear illustration of my position:

	Males.	Females.	
Jan. 1825	104	169	
Jan. 1828	104	106	decrease $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per ann.
	Births this year, 9—deaths, 9.		
Jan. 1829	104	106	equal.

	Adult Males.	Adult Females.	Young.	Total.
St. Vincent, 1824	35	36	35	106
1828	33	33	31	

Decrease 2 per cent. per annum.

Further extracts are needless; and it being extremely troublesome and, unassisted, somewhat complicated, I shall content myself with observing, that upwards of 100 returns are in my possession.

I think I have stated enough for this part of my object, which goes to prove that, in any state of society, there must be a much larger proportion than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of females beyond equal numbers to insure an important increase.

It would astonish you and all England if you could see a regular return of the decrease of the White population in the Colonies in the last six years. Your Reporter (the A. S.) states Nevis at 800 in 1824; it now contains somewhat under 160, counting children even newly born according to my calculation, but, allowing for mistakes, say 200. St. Kitt's is set down at 1800; I am certain 400 would embrace the whole. Tobago I am not much acquainted with, but I should think the decrease of the Whites there more than elsewhere, except in the quarters of Trinidad between Sheerwan and Guaracara, nearly all included, and opposite the mouths of the Oroonoko. There is, to be sure, one thing which operates greatly against the Whites, to which the Negroes are also subject, although among the many its results are not so apparent: it sounds like our Rheumatis', and strangers would suppose it was that complaint, if they were to ask what their relative died of, when they are told "Rum it is" killed him. It is a complaint most common in low swampy situations. On one estate I had to inquire into, if my memory is not treacherous, there were thirty-two White managers and overseers (the estate employed three or four) who had disappeared in ten or a dozen years. It was remote from other properties, and had the name of being very unhealthy. The tomb-woods or tumuli, without wherewithal to mark a name or epitaph, were all apparent, as a *memento mori* to the survivors, close to the windows. The then manager (1827) had held the estate a five years' tug, and, in spite of many trials



of strength, he was still in the ascendant. But he had performed the rites of sepulture in more ways than one, had been the "*tumulorum fossor*" of many an overseer, and I believe it was not from any lack of *quantity* that he also had not answered any one of the many notices that he had to quit, but that he had the precaution to begin by laying in an article of superior quality, whereby he was enabled to drink his simple beverage a few years older than those did that went before him, most of whom had it from the can. I asked him the names of the different persons over whom he had made so many *spirit*-stirring orations, and of those he he knew or had heard of that were laid low before his day, at these *funera tacita*, where even the S.T.T.L. of the Romans would be doubly superfluous—from wanting readers, and because the earth sat light enough over the bodies, where two foot of digging came to water. "What killed him?"—"Rum, Sir, rum," was I think the burthen of the song, and "Fright, Sir, fright," filled up the vacancies. Now, Sir, although the Negroes do not appear to die of this disease in the same proportion as the Whites, yet does new rum (in Trinidad particularly, not only new but bad) take off immense numbers somewhat before nature otherwise would have spun out their web. The less they are watched, the less strict they are kept, the more do they get access to it; for they can purchase it in quantities from one another (where it is made a payment for jobs) for one shilling a gallon, and at the hucksters or grog-shops at one shilling and sixpence. Hence, the less value this article bears in England (and it is scarcely worth making for that market) the larger are the quantities expended in the Colonies, the lower the price, the greater the number of deaths and the greater the number of punishments; for a corroboration of which fact I refer you to the Slave Protector's Reports for 1829 and 1830, where you will find nearly a third of the punishments are recorded for drunkenness. Probably this also may be laid at the door of the system, by a simple mode of reasoning. As—"If rum was not made, rum would not be drunk." Tobago, from its very unhealthiness, against which this is ignorantly thought a specific, has been celebrated for its consumption of rum and

the deaths of its inhabitants—of my White, and your Black brothers and sisters also. About four years since, fourteen or forty (I believe the latter) young Scotchmen landed there; of *that lot* there are two alive. *Seven hundred or two thousand per cent. in four years*, “murdered by the system!” “Such a rate of mortality, if it existed in the most crowded city, would soon render it a desert,—would in the course of 50 years (leaving out the 0) leave the metropolis of this empire a desert, and ere long, if it extended throughout the universe, remove every human being from the world.” (Buxton *loquitur*—Parliamentary Speech.) I don’t exactly know how all my Whites have become food for crabs and worms, nor do you state in what manner your 45,000 Mauri have disappeared; here at any rate we are “*par nobile fratrum*.”

Here, in the middle of the Atlantic, I cannot know how far your statement has been met by counter-arithmetical calculations, by either lovers of truth or friends to the Colonies. The same apathy, engendered by a constant series of persecutions and long-continued misfortunes, which exists, and which can only be recovered with brighter days in the Colonies, and which extreme alarm at home has of late years caused the shaking off, may have resumed its dominion. I shall, therefore, stand excused if I go over the same ground as others who may have replied to you since my last accounts in the early days of June.

This, however, I shall reserve for a second part; wherein, with all humility, it is my intention, after comparing the results of my calculations with your assertions, to propose a scale by which compensation might be accomplished, and all the desired ends gained but one—*immediate emancipation*, without injury to any, and only asking from the Government a remission of above one-tenth part of the duties received from the staple productions of the West Indies for a certain period; by and through which I think it possible the object may be accomplished, without, as our arch enemy Napoleon expressed it, “destroying our sugar Colonies, filling up England’s last ditch, or breaking down her last wall.”

It has been said, by assuredly ill-judging friends of the Colonists, that upwards of one hundred and twenty millions

will not be sufficient to compensate them. They may as well expect one hundred thousand millions; it is in fact, in other words, shutting themselves the door of compensation. The nation has shared largely in the benefit, and should pay some of the penalty; the planters have also shared in the benefit, and should be prepared for either sacrifice or exertion to prevent it. I will presume the Government is forced by the nation to insist on some definitive measure.

The Nation thus calls for emancipation.

The Slaves have been totally unsettled and disorganized, expecting emancipation.

The Planter, fairly dealt by, would be better for emancipation, if free labour was only even tolerably or partially established.

The Nation admits the justice of Compensation.

The Planter has a right to demand Compensation.

The Slaves, of themselves, can be no party to Compensation.

The Nation cannot compensate to the full value of the Property.

The Planter demands, as a right, its full value.

The Slave can be no party to valuing himself as Property. Will the Nation enter upon a feasible scheme, and meet the Planter?

Will the Planter come into a reasonable proposition, and meet the Nation?

Will both the Nation and the Planter join hands in assisting the Slave to do his part, in such a way as shall tend to the benefit of all three?

It appears to me the Nation has to dread the loss of Revenue;

The Planter loss of Property;

The Slave, if not to dread to be exposed to all the evils attending want of employment, doubly dreadful if sugar-culture is abandoned, where there is already a superabundant population.

The Nation will have—First, to consider the consequences upon the Revenue of any sudden convulsion in the Sugar Colonies.

Secondly—Whether it cannot adopt a graduated scale of Compensation, which, while it may be guarded with provisos, may at the same time encourage the Planter to establish the system of wages for labour, and fair profit from stock.

Thirdly—The dreadful consequences of breaking down, by a first act of injustice, the sacred barrier of private rights of one of its classes.

Fourthly—Whether the crushed lumps of England may not be admitted into Russia and other countries on the same terms as those of Cuba, which go through the same process; or as the clayed sugar of the Brazils: whether the Slave-trade may not be stopped, and the value of the staple commodity raised by an increased demand, or by a bounty of about £140,000 on the annual overplus of the refiner.

The Planter will have to consider—First, the consequences of any sudden convulsion.

Secondly—Whether it will not be madness to allow the time to pass, when there is a chance of something being obtained.

Thirdly—Whether it is not his bounden duty to do his utmost to prepare the Slaves to be willing free labourers; to increase civilization, from which alone can it be expected the Slave can be brought to understand the real meaning of doing as he would be done by, and loving his neighbour as himself, and thence comprehending that the prime value of wages for work is the encouragement of industry.

Without pretending to be a conjuror, it is my intention in the second part to submit some proposals, with these objects in view. I shall be met by statements that Government will not—that it cannot grant any thing. I laugh already at the idea. Assuredly they will lose at least half the Revenue from the Colonies; for it is folly to suppose matters can stand still. Either there will be an explosion in the Colonies, or the Slaves will be sent forth in such a manner that a century will not be sufficient to recover from the earth half the produce the Colonies now send to Europe.



People in England smile at the idea of the Colonies doing without the mother country. God forbid the mother country should ever force the Colonists to make the experiment! They want nothing that England would not benefit by supplying, and that could not be obtained in other parts of the world, where they would find ready and efficient markets for their own staple commodities. Nothing but interested motives or the rankest ignorance can sway that portion of the public press which calls them a burthen more than equivalent to the vast revenue received by and through them. Let them cast their eyes over the returns, and let them take into consideration the patronage—the immense sums paid to Crown officers; the opportunity of remunerating defaulters, by placing them as the King's representatives over the unfortunate West Indians, who pay them more than double the salary from home, which is kept back to make up for their deficiencies. In war there would be anxiety enough to maintain and obtain them; and already is loyalty so shaken, any master would be courted that would defend them against the machinations of your party. It is true, the country suffers slightly from the protection given to West India sugar. Reduce the duties half, and admit East and West alike, the latter will not grumble, for the superiority of the manufacture and its infinitely easier access to the market would always insure it a preference. People say, "How will you do without troops, if we abandon you?" Ask the Nevitians, Tortolians, and people of Montserrat, where there is not a soldier! Ask the colonels of regiments, who have returned from Jamaica, how many of their men would have been efficient if they had been called out; and ask how many hours the few would have outlived the fatigue of a march. Ask the officer now living, who, on the last disturbance, was carried in carts with sixty men fifty-two miles, and who, without a fight, returned *with two*! Ask any Jamaica man! Ask all Dr. Lushington's coloured people, who have stamped his fame for *truth*, and you will find that there is more reliance on the Militia than on the Regulars, and that half the able Negroes would join the Whites and the Militia in the event of a disturbance, even on the score of manumission.

If Government would try a fair experiment, let them purchase the Island of Nevis. It is to be had, and for a moderate sum; and the present Planters would become Government tenants under stipulations. If the cultivation of the 9000 Negroes was continued, at even its present moderate quantity of about one ton for four Negroes, the Islands would all adopt the system. Or, why not take the Tortola or Berbice Negroes, and fairly try them upon estates? Free all the Government Negroes, and let the Colonies fairly try whether they will keep up estate-cultivation in the only way (sugar) that can remunerate or employ a superabundant population. It is useless to think the labour of tradesmen a criterion to go by. You, Sir, say, "Free labour has been found to answer." I deny that it has been tried, and I deny that any free labour of tradesmen is a criterion. At Trinidad a carpenter is reported, in the Parliamentary Papers, to earn four dollars, or eighteen shillings sterling, per day; thus a day's work is more than enough for the week. I see there are many free people put down as labourers—*true, for themselves*—labourers one day in a week at provision-grounds, labourers in boats or as porters. But nothing can be a fair criterion but the same constant and steady adherence from year's end to year's end to field cultivation; and Government have no Negroes any where that are upon estates as labourers; and any thing they may do or you assert to the contrary, I will prove is only intended to gull the people of England.

As to compensating to the full amount, even if the sum was not wanted and was perfectly ready for being issued, it would be about the most injurious thing that could happen to the Slaves, however fair, just, and proper, as regards the Planter, who would be too happy to surrender his property to the guidance of Messrs. Denman, Lushington, Macauley, Stephen, yourself, and all the rest of the *old women*, who have *so little to learn*, being already "perfectly acquainted with the state of society in his Majesty's West India Colonies."—(Denman *loquitur*.) In the Appendix you will find a few curious specimens of the state of society among

Slaves, which I only publish to strengthen your knowledge, and to afford you an opportunity of advancing them as proofs, strong as Holy Writ, of your oft-expressed opinions. For the present,

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient humble servant,

**CHRISTOPHER CLAXTON.**

## APPENDIX.

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IN adding the following specimens of servilian correspondence, I have taken pains to Anglicise as much as possible not only the phraseology, but the words also; such as, tell him, for “tay em,” all of us, for “aw we,” I did not see them, for “me no shee um,” &c.: at the same time I have left enough to preserve the character: it is a pity the ungrammatical gibberish is not altogether discouraged. Unfortunately, the White and educated coloured class find it convenient to use it to the Negroes. Nothing, in my opinion, can tend more to keep the mind in darkness, or to the perpetuation of ignorance. Writing does not form a part of the system of education of the Slaves, although it is taught at the free-schools in the towns; about one-third of the numbers attending which are Slaves’ children. It is not to be implied, therefore, that there are not numbers of Slaves who can write; nor is it to be considered that it forms a portion of the Sunday school, daily school, or domestic instruction, on or about estates; nor is it necessary. I have no general motive in publishing the letters, &c.; they do not apply to the question in debate; for, as they are almost all from house servants, it cannot be said by the West Indians that they prove the happy or contented state of the population, any more than the enemies of the Colonists can say it is one more proof that the Slaves are in a state to *bear freedom*. Except in one or two instances, the writers are domestic slaves, and they are a perfectly distinct class from the field Negroes. He apes the manners, the dress, the peculiarities of his master, and she of her mistress. They use their clothes and go by their names; they are perfect adepts



in catching the air as well as the words of persons used to good society; they watch every change of fashion—of young dandies, and young ladies from school, as they arrive; catch all the new airs, and drop old ones as vulgar; and even with them, the waltz and the quadrille are likely to give place to the galopade and the mazurka. There are a few passages I shall remark upon, that relate to the opinions of the Slaves themselves, as to the immediate results of the coming step, the imagined near approach of which has so unsettled them, that I apprehend a decisive and just arrangement, looking to the future, would be almost as great a boon to the Whites as the Slaves. This ground I have already gone over. I shall therefore content myself with observing, that one-third of the whole are not desirous of the boon, unless it brings some additional tangible benefit, (such as money, which is a prevailing idea.) To half of this third—the oldest, it would be starvation and death; to the other half, loss of present property. Of the second-third, half of them would probably do well for themselves; the other half would rob and plunder their neighbours, and lead the junior third into all species of corruption. All that is doing, and about to be done, by and through these, would receive a sudden check, ruinous to civilization, destructive of happiness, and detrimental to Christianity.

The Negroes generally go by their master's or mistress's name. Some I am not at liberty to publish.

#### No. I.

This formed part of a matter which came into Court, upon an action to recover the value of the Sugar here alluded to.

To G. H.

Sir,—What do you mean by not paying me what you owe? You waiting till all free and no law left, I suppose. I sent you the full weight of yams, and you have only returned 50lbs. of sugar of the 300 agree upon between us. And now, after busing me once—my brother twice—you ask consideration from my friendship. What, try cheat me worse than the devil did Adam afore flood—then expect affection? No, Sir! God choose all in good time. Thanks to him, Courts of Law still open for bad Negroes, where no recipration is—there no honour; and cause of that, I put you in complain Court.

JOHN M—.

## No. II.

Dear Sam,

Tell Granny not be in fright; it no true people all turn out of house and groun when them free, as Massa paper tell them all soon will be. Massa Bogsham no give them Jezbel kiss and betray like Bill Force. Dogger Lushem, Bogsham's brother, tell he have seven hundred thousan, who he have free in Shmaica, all solders, ready to come here, if massa no give same lowance as now, and two bitt and half for six hours asides, when them like to work. God finger been manifes. What he will that he do: what he do that he will; and every body know he do what he like. My massa say good man get good place (Na nyanketon) *in Yan-key Town*. When all us free, I shall try get there with some of the Buckras—*have plenty go there then*. I expect same wages. Gobernor man tell me them been give in London, cause can keep counts now; but shall try to find place on board ship, cause them give servant almost double (dubbily) *when dem on board*. Gobernor man tell me sometime two, three (hunda dolla) hundred dollars. Massa only pay Massa George eight a month—me one. Eh buddy! Slave wages one thing—free wages another thing. Tell Judy pick all plantain, banana, every thing on tree, before next week; when every body nigger run about she no keep *notin* there. Messman want fat sheep next Monday. Gobernor dine with officers; he give fourteen dollars. I send this by Massa's katkiss (catechist), now Mr. — gone. Ah! that good Metdist man; hope you no forget what he teach you. Tay Judy I see her Sunday. Please God look after sheep.

Your brother (buddy,)

JOE M——.

N. B.—At least every third word was Negro gibberish. Some remarkable expressions I have printed in Italics.

## No. III.

Is so short, that I may be excused in giving it literally, notwithstanding it injures the jaws of my readers worse than a Russian bulletin. It was given to me by a gentleman, as a curiosity: Mr. Thomas —, being his man, asked his son to read it for him, and he kept it. There is nothing to the point, therefore, missing. It is unimportant.

MR. THOMAS ———

—— Estate.

Sa,—So you tole Mary I bin kepe wid Jonna abta dat wat ews bin fren shup. Spouse I tay you wipe aw you bin do da Retret danse dey na fite natween Jshemima an Su, wat you bin say den na sides wat appem abta Joanna's pribat te to say wat my massa bin say to Capan —— you no jumplum. Sall cut de nexshum we tranga, no you bin shashfy, I reddy gib you any way na shash-fashum you bin chus axsh.

PHILIP,

Who bin hat you now mor bin lub you ons.

The majority of the following were collected by a gentleman of Nevis, for the purpose of sending, I believe, to the Island agent. He kindly let me copy from the originals. The list also accompanied the notes of the “high life below stairs” party, which I see no reason for withholding.

Constant Harris,	Slave to Mrs. E. Martyn.
Domingo Williamson, }	to Miss Williamson, coloured.
Elizabeth Williamson, }	
Celia Bertrand,	
James Duke,	to the Misses Bertrand, coloured.
James Hancock,	to the Rev. D——
H. Brazier,	to Mrs. Martin.
George Leacock,	to Miss B——
Maria Weekes,	to the Rev. L——
James Nisbet,	to Mrs. Weekes.
John Union,	to Miss J. Arthurton.
E. Bertrand, }	to Miss Mary Butler.
Matilda Bertrand, }	to Joseph Herbert, Esq. free
F. Taylor,	Black Merchant.
W. Barnes,	to F. T——, Esq.
	to Mr. B——

Mr. John Union compliments to Miss E. Williamson, and will be very happy of her company to dinner, on the 1st day of June, 1831, at the house of Miss J. Bridgwater.

Mr. John Union expects the pleasure of the Misses Bertrand's company to dinner, on the 1st of June, 1831, at Miss Bridgwater's, to meet several ladies and gentlemen of their acquaintance.

Mr. Josh. Hancock's compliments to Miss Maria Weekes, and will be happy in her company to dinner on Wednesday next.

Do. to Mr. Brazier.—Do. to Mr. Leacock.

Mr. James Nisbet's compliments to Mr. Brazier, and requests the honour of his company to a ball and dinner, at Miss Bridgewater's, on the 5th of May, 1831.

Note.—The Scarbros, Bertrands, will all be there that day.

Miss Bertrand's compliments to Miss Weeks, and will be at home to a private tea on Friday evening. The new dances, and Weeks with his fiddle, if two dollars are raised to pay him.

Mr. Monsack's compliments, and will be happy in Miss Chevoe's company to a ball at Moreton's Bay. One dollar a man. A supper table—and cake to be cut.

This is repeated to several others.

Mr. Kerrel, to a dance, to several of the parties included, for the 7th of May. A gentleman will cut the cake—and all the newest music and dances.

#### No. IV.

To J. TAYLOR, Esq.

Rouge, Theif, Lyre.

Sir,—What the reason, you not speak to me? are you angry? and even if you are angry, who cares? time coming when every body have his own law—look out then. You humbugs me very much—you no gemplum—you rascally villain, and these few lines I drops may be answered.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant

W. BARNES.

#### No. V.

MR. JAMES.

Dear Jim,—It had been better for you to stop here. Great things been to do. De Bishop a new governor over the Governor, and over all the Buckras at the Court House come—the first thing he do, look over all the Militia.\* He come to be over Mr. D—— and Parson K—— and over the Methodishers; all, except *our* † people, who keep quiet and snug; and no want no one. He

\* I presume this alludes to the honours that were paid him on his landing at the Island.

† Moravians, I presume.



been ride round look all the Church. I go with master—he really fine man, preach well—but what you think he been do? spose he think we all great fool here, he been have paper stick upon church door, to tell all we who may marry. Say must not marry you Granny. Who the devil he think go marry his old Granny. Master tell me write you, say he have letter from Mr. ——. Suppose you *like live* with him again, he coming out in ———, and tell him ask you. You mind, let me know. You better ask him two dollar more a month, for when people free, and dem say them will be fore long, country servants all come to town for place, and suppose no one to hire good man like us, for Master swear he no stop, and *all dem dine here Monday, I hear* say same thing. Must send answer by vessel that take this.

Your old friend for ever,

THOMAS S——.

#### No. VI.

Dear Missis,—I take this paper from Miss Fan-case, I want for tell you great trouble that been come, and which I pray much in mind please God who choose he own time to bring he own things about make you come home very fast. Master Joe been very cross to all we in the house since Tuesday, when he dine in town come home so-so. Yesterday morning father been tell me he no know what the matter Master Joe no speak him, and when he speak give him short answer (hansa) and very cross to all the people. Mr. ——— dine here that day, and his man Charles bring his chaise to take him home at night, but it come on weather and them sleep. Charles say that day he knew all about what Master cross about. Great talk Charles hear after dinner in town,\* about freeing the people, and about every body treatment. Master been say how he treat he own people, and Capt. ——— laugh loud. Master get angry, talk very loud, and Capt. ——— say he saw he head driver, watching people by (nyampis) *the yam piece* by road-side, he say fine gang to father, and ask if they get plenty to eat and all that, and that father tell him so-so, that Massa no clothe em good and work em too much. I ask father all about it this morning, and he tell me the gemplum when he speak to him speak in way *make him think he want answer that way*. Father never have vantage gospel light make him speak truth always, and Missis

\* Negroes invariably listen.

know poor Negro always answer which way them think people want, cause sometime them get two three bitts. Father berry sorry berry, and he promise take over this after work, and pray God you give father bit paper; tell Massa Joe, Christian man word forgive and forget, and Missis please tell father wether all true what Charles say what them talk about freeing people, cause father say he sell he pigs, he sheep, and all what he got, cause he say he sure he no keep one of them; and Massa Joe been make him sad, cause he tole him to day, when that day come he make large garden where all the old houses stand, he pull em all down and make cattle pen and pighouse of all dem new ones under the pat over the gut, and he want Missis to tell what she do about me and Frank.

Dear Missis,

Your dutiful servant,

MARIANNA.



MERCHANT, PRINTER, INGRAM-COURT, FENCHURCH-STREET



TO THE

MARQUIS OF CHANDOS.

---

MY LORD,

IN times like the present, when innovation and revolution are the stepping-stones to popularity ;—when vested rights are sacrificed at the shrine of reckless ambition ;—when changes are miscalled improvement, and their proposers men of talent ;—and when Englishmen are treated as if guilty of corrupt practices without the sacred and solemn ordeal of Trial by Jury ;—it behoves every man to raise his voice in support of justice, and to oppose the theories and wild doctrines of a ministry, which it has pleased Providence to inflict upon our once happy country.

My mind has been led into this train of reflection by a conversation with an intelligent and honest man, who has been conversant and connected with our West-India colonies during the last thirty years. His property is in ships, and he has no direct interest in slaves or plantations. Astounded by the assertions set forth by “The Saints” and by their dupes and agents, I put to his honour and integrity to answer, truly, the following questions:—

Q. How would you describe the state and condition of the slave-population in the West-India colonies?

A. As the happiest amongst the labouring classes in the world.

Q. Specify their advantages?

A. 1st, Light labour.

2d, A supply to profusion of the necessities of life.

3d, Fostered and watched over in infancy, sickness, and old age.

4th, By the laws of the colonies protected against separation from their families.

5th, The governors and authorities of the different islands being in duty

bound to listen to their complaints and to afford redress.

6th, The means they possess of realizing property for their own exclusive benefit, by the sale of pigs, poultry, and other marketable commodities. In many cases, the proprietors are purchasers at market-value when there is no demand in the market.

Q. What do you consider to be their natural character?

A. Prone to idleness and “given to sensuality,” but cheerful, merry, and contented. On every Saturday night they indulge in the pastime of dancing—and such dancing as cheers the heart and evinces the absence of care, anxiety, and grief. In many of their habitations I have been invited to take a glass of wine.

Q. Were they emancipated, what proportion of them would continue to cultivate the soil as free labourers?

A. *Not one in thirty*: as a corroboration of the above, one of the laws enacted in the whole of the colonies is:—“That no proprietor shall be at liberty to emancipate a slave, without giving se-

curity that he do not become chargeable to the public ;” and, further, it is my opinion that, were they relieved from their present obligation to perform *light labour*, they would not even have the industry to cultivate their provision-ground, and that the mortality from famine would speedily realize, to a frightful extent, the mortality which is falsely stated to be the consequence of their present state: vide Sierra Leone and Free Labour.

Q. Are corporal punishments frequent, and are they ever inflicted upon females ?

A. Corporal punishments are of rare occurrence amongst the males, and I have not heard of or witnessed the infliction of any corporal punishment upon any female during the last twenty years !!

Q. Suppose there were to be a weekly court held by a government magistrate, unconnected with slaves or slave property, to award punishment or dismiss complaint, would such an arrangement better the condition, or add to the happiness of the slave ?

A. By no means. The complaints which are brought before the managers are



mostly from one negro against another ; for instance, one man allows his pig to damage his neighbour's garden ; another pilfers his rum, &c. &c. Punishments for neglect of work are few in number in the catalogue of punishments ; indeed, I know one plantation where the usual punishment was a badge of disgrace, not unlike that which is worn by Greenwich and Chelsea pensioners, as a punishment for drunkenness or irregular conduct.

Q. Do you believe the state of slavery to be productive of crime ?

A. In the West Indies—*certainly not*. In London, and in England generally, the abuses of power, acts of theft, robbery, murder, and sickening cruelty are as a hundred to one. Let any unprejudiced person read the police-reports of the Metropolis, of Sheffield, and Manchester, or the cruelties of that monster of a woman Hibbard, and then let him refer to the colonial prints !! Let him read and mark the difference, and then turn with disgust from the vile calumniators of the much-injured West-India proprietor. And now, my Lord, let us

turn to the agitators and principal movers in this all-exciting question. Let us consider those “Saints” who extort from the weaknesses, ignorance, and enthusiasm of the lower orders, hundreds of thousands of pounds, which they distribute amongst the thorough-paced hypocrite, whose trade is falsehood; too idle to gain a livelihood by honest means, he works upon the morbid sensibility of (mostly) the weaker sex, and disseminates, as facts, assertions which the Master Saints know are “false as Hell!”

To many poor persons they present themselves, and ask “if they wish to see their “children torn from them and loaded with “chains?” presenting, at the same time, a most diabolical illustration of cruelties said to be practised on the slave, and upon their shrinking from such a fate befalling their own offspring; they then say, “then sign this petition.”

Upon one occasion, of which proof is at hand, two sainted delegates took up their abode in one parish, collected £32 : 8 : 6, and, in the meanwhile, the bill at the inn amounted to £31 some odd money, for din-

ners, wine, post-horses, &c., thus plundering the poor of the parish and neighbourhood of £32, while only a few shillings were reserved for their charitable and holy object.

Look, my Lord, at Sierra Leone. The amount of contracts; the state of morality; the produce of free-labour; and the mortality amongst Europeans; then, my Lord, turn to the conduct of Government and the profits of the sainted Mac Cauleys. Look, too, my Lord, at the splendid fortune of Fowell Buxton, the amount “derived from the sale of slaves.” Ask him how much interest he derives from Irish mortgages? How much is returned in charity to the degraded labourers of the soil, and how he feels, when uttering one of his elaborate graces over his splendid banquets, being at the moment aware that the widow and orphan of the poor West Indian are reduced to want, starvation, and misery, by the promulgation of foul and false calumnies. But the voice of the widow and orphan will not be lifted up in vain, and the day of retribution may not be far off. Then, too, my Lord, where was the great Doctor of Laws at the meeting for the relief of the starving Irish!!! What, Doctor, was there no client

to be gained by a display of oratory at the Exeter-Hall upon that occasion? Did you believe that your presence there might take a few pounds from your enormous income in DEFENDING the *injured* and OPPRESSED? Were you diffident, in your own knowledge, as to the actual state of the Irish peasantry; you, who are so well acquainted with the hapless condition of the injured negro? Shame is it upon the common sense, and naturally good and generous feelings of the British Nation, to be led into the path of injustice and cruelty by such agents. It is to be hoped that better days are dawning upon us, and that such a Reform will take place as shall deprive political and popular *traders* of their baleful influence. What man can reflect, without unutterable disgust, upon a speech delivered at “the popular Yorkshire Election,” when the aim of the Orator was to minister to the vanities and passions of the multitude, at the expense of every thing sacred and most to be revered in this country.

A short time elapses, when the said Orator declares his independence of *all* parties, and within *a few hours*, and in the face of this declaration, stoops to become a member of



that very aristocracy which he sought to bring into hatred and contempt. From such men, and from such baseness, well may every Englishman exclaim, “the Lord deliver us!!!”

But what, my Lord, the oppressed and calumniated West Indian has most to complain of, is the utter weakness and incapability of Government!! *If there be* abuses to be redressed, where is the Government? Why not examine the Governors of the Islands at the bar of the House of Commons? Why not appoint a Commission to report upon the state of the Colonies, and if the Commission decide that the present proprietors are to lose their property, let it be at the expense of the nation. Let not a British Government lend themselves to the spoliation of the helpless and unprotected! Why, my Lord, does not some talented member of the high and honourable class of old English gentlemen, move for the tenures of the different absentee proprietors in famishing Ireland, and compare them with the tenures by which property is held in the Colonies? Why, too, my Lord, are not the returns of rent from these estates moved for, and then let it be shewn, which

class of proprietors contribute most largely to the support of the labourers of the soil?

Since the political economists have been in the ascendant, many West-India estates lost for successive years one-third *more* than the value of their produce for the support of their labouring population; while the Irish absentee landlords (amongst whom may be included the *Honorable* member for Northamptonshire,) are abstracting from the starving peasantry of Ireland thousands and thousands per annum! Then, my Lord, examine their titles. The West Indian in almost every case will be found to have *purchased* his property under severe laws and *enactments*, while the *Honorable* and absentee gentlemen have mostly obtained their grants from arbitrary monarchs, and in times of confiscation.

I must beg pardon of all those who devote a few minutes to the perusal of the foregoing statement.

A sense of wrong, dishonesty, and falsehood has stimulated to an expression of my sentiments, and I can only hope that a cause so just, involving a question of safety to property, and a question of national greatness, will be speedily taken up and

advocated by a more talented individual. I am aware that there are those, amongst the modern school, who declare all Colonies to be a *tax* on the mother country.

Hence, Ireland, at least the starving portion of it, ought to be dissevered from the mother country.

The poor kelp-growers of Scotland, who interfere with the barilla speculations of the house, in which the Honorable Member for Dover *once* had an interest, should share the same fate, as should Gibraltar, Malta, &c. &c. &c. The unshaken loyalty, the devoted patriotism of our western possessions give them a claim to better treatment.

In their seas and neighbourhood the British Flag has gained many of its most splendid triumphs.

With their history are identified the names of a St. Vincent, a Nelson and a Collingwood. Sad and mournful would be the dawn which should break upon a foreign flag, waving over ramparts, bearing the records of British valour and the stamp of British greatness and British dominion. But, of a choice of evils, this latter would be the least: if the ministry are not in public confidence or ability equal to the govern-

ment of the Colonies, they are bound to relieve them from their allegiance.

The “tyranny of the Saints” is indeed no longer to be borne with.

Before concluding, I may advert to the fact, that the Exports to our West-India Colonies have diminished, within these few years, to the amount of two or three millions; thus diminishing to the home manufacturer the demand for labour, throwing a number of seamen out of employ, and lessening the supply of comforts and necessities to the negro-population. Then, my Lord, allow me to call your attention to the picture of happiness, described in such glowing and animated language by Messrs. Bailey and Coleridge, in their works on the West Indies, upon all occasions when the negroes assemble together, either proceeding to work, to market, or to scenes of festivity! Contrast this with the degraded and sorrowful condition of the English pauper!! It happened to myself to be passing over an estate belonging to one of the honorable, liberal, and enlightened members for the county of York, upon one of the worst days of November, and to find (breaking stones upon the road) a miserable old pauper,



worn out in constitution, broken down in spirit, who stated his age to be eighty, and who was appointed by the parish overseers thus to earn *eight-pence* per day!!! This, my Lord, is not a singular case;—let any one attend parish and vestry meetings, and then, if he dare, hesitate to say who are mostly the objects of pity, the free-born Englishman or the West-India negro? But such sickening facts never obtrude themselves upon the delicate sensibilities of the Saints.

While starvation and famine are carrying on their devastations in the Sister Island, the London public are amused by long accounts of “the beef steaks” cooked in “the stoke-hole” of Fowell Buxton’s brewery, for the entertainment of the King’s Ministers. There is yet another awful and appalling result, not unlikely to flow from the state of excitement produced by the saintly incendiaries;—it is a rehearsal of the tragedy of St. Domingo. Human nature shrinks from the appalling contemplation; but human experience *confirms* the probability of such a consummation to their saintly labours. That the Colonists have a paramount interest in the improvement of the black population, no man but “a Saint” will affect to enter-

tain a doubt. The higher their attainments as a moral, religious, and industrious people, the greater the security of property, and the less the danger of violent change or convulsion. But surely they ought to be governed according to their actual condition, with a view to their gradual improvement. Planters are, at all times, willing to give facility to their slaves receiving religious instruction; and habits of industry are most effectually promoted amongst them by *their power of realizing property for their own use and benefit*. In short, they are a happy and contented race; and heavy will be the responsibility of that Government, who shall sacrifice life and property at the instigation of interested quacks, or, at least, of misguided enthusiasts.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

A PROPRIETOR OF WEST-INDIA PROPERTY  
BY INHERITANCE.

*London, 1st July, 1831.*







REMARKS

ON

LORD VISCOUNT GODERICH'S

DISPATCH

TO THE

GOVERNORS OF THE COLONIES,

OF

DECEMBER 10, 1831.

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BY

A MEMBER OF THE WEST INDIAN BODY.

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LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

1832.

LONDON:

C. ROWORTH AND SONS, BELL YARD,  
TEMPLE BAR.

## REMARKS, &c.

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MY LORD,

*April 30, 1832.*

HAVING accidentally read in the *Courier* of the 27th, a Dispatch from your Lordship to the Governors of the different West India Colonies, bearing date the 10th December, 1831, I was led to make some hasty remarks, and which, having since arranged them somewhat more in order, I venture now to address to your Lordship. I am fully sensible, my Lord, that some apology is due from an humble individual for thus intruding himself upon your notice ; the only one I have to offer, is, the assurance, that I am influenced by no party views, and that the object of the few remarks, which I now take the liberty of addressing to your Lordship, is simply to call your attention to certain parts of the Dispatch in question, leaving it to your Lordship to determine as to their relevancy.

On the subject of the West Indian question generally, which has been so amply discussed, and on which your Lordship is already in pos-

session, as, I must presume, of the fullest information, it cannot be expected, that my remarks should throw any new light; indeed, they are intended to be confined to your Lordship's Dispatch of the 10th of December. I may, however, without impropriety, I hope, preface them by congratulating the West Indian body, and, indeed, the public at large, on the new and more extended direction, which this almost exhausted question has so suddenly taken. A ray of light has thus broken in upon the West Indian proprietor, which infuses a gleam of hope into his prospects; since it is now not the Colonist alone who is repeating his hitherto unavailing petition for relief; the unanimous voice of a great proportion of the commercial interest of the country, who, at length, identified his cause and his interests with their own, has loudly called upon His Majesty's Government, to well weigh the value and importance of the West Indian Colonies to the mother-country, and to reconsider, and to inquire, ere it is too late, whether perseverance in the course, which His Majesty's Government are now pursuing with respect to the Colonies, must not be productive of the most extensive and irreparable ruin.

I might, perhaps, also congratulate the West Indian body and the public, on the change, which I may presume has taken place in your Lordship's opinions; and on the inquiry before a

Committee of the House of Lords, which has been so often pressed by the West Indian body, having been at length, though very reluctantly, conceded by the Government; inasmuch as it may tend to the elucidation of truths, on which even your Lordship would seem to be but imperfectly informed, and the West Indian question may thereby undergo that solemn and impartial inquiry, which may ultimately induce his Majesty's Government to convert the sword into the ploughshare, by resuming measures of reconciliation and recommendation towards the Colonies, and withdrawing, altogether, those of a menacing and compulsory character.

It is, my Lord, to the influence, which the meeting lately held at the London Tavern must have had upon the Government, that we are indebted for this boon of inquiry. In speaking of that *meeting*, my Lord, it is not sufficient to say of it, in the ordinary terms, that a more numerous body of individuals of the highest respectability never assembled together in the City of London; but, when the great intelligence and information of those, by whom the resolutions were brought forward; the variety and the magnitude of the interests which were there met, and the *unanimity* and good feeling, which prevailed throughout the discussion, are taken into consideration, I think it might be rather said, that the meeting presented an assembly almost unparalleled in the annals of



Commercial history. And here, my Lord, I may be permitted to pay my humble tribute of praise and acknowledgment to that Noble Personage, who presided on that occasion. The urbanity and ability, which he displayed, the total absence and exclusion of all party feeling, and of every topic of irritation, which characterised the observations with which his Lordship introduced the business of the day, gave a tone of moderation, and, at the same time, of dignity and decision to the proceedings, from which they never departed, and which could not fail, as it has done, to make a very strong impression on His Majesty's Government and the public. It remains, therefore, only for His Majesty's Government, in furtherance of the prayer of that meeting, to throw no impediment in the way of an impartial and effectual consideration of the whole West Indian question, so that the various and important interests of the petitioners, and of the public at large, may be finally and satisfactorily adjusted. After this short digression, which I hope will not be considered altogether irrelevant, I shall proceed, with your Lordship's permission, with my remarks on your Dispatch.

In presuming, my Lord, to offer an opinion on your Dispatch generally, addressed to independent legislatures, for the professed purpose of convincing them of the expediency, nay, of the absolute necessity of an assumption of power by His

Majesty's Government, to say the least of it, altogether novel, the first observation that presents itself, is, that the language of it is of too peremptory and threatening a character, to be either persuasive or conciliatory. There is, indeed, a studied candour and plausibility pervading the Dispatch, which is ingeniously devised to render it the more palatable, and to give a colour to its real object; but, my Lord, when the varnish is removed, it would seem, on a little closer inspection, to contain somewhat more of speciousness, than of sound reasoning, and less of real courtesy and conciliation, than of sarcasm and reproach.

The struggle, moreover, my Lord, between expediency and duty, which is so conspicuous throughout the Dispatch, in my humble judgment, would seem to indicate a vacillation and indecision on the part of His Majesty's Government, and to betray that "deficiency in quality" (to borrow your Lordship's expression) which alone could give to your Dispatch the character of firmness, impartiality and independence; or, in other words, to brand it rather as the spurious offspring of an influential body, than the legitimate declaration of the deliberate, unbiassed, and comprehensive views of His Majesty's Government, on a question of such magnitude and importance.

There is, my Lord, one passage in your Dispatch,

which has indeed surprised me ; it is that in which you say, “ *The experience of eight years has now placed beyond the reach of all rational doubt, the fact, which, independently of such experience, might have been anticipated, that laws framed in the Colonies, and passed by the Colonial legislatures, are deficient in that quality, without which all such legislation must be nugatory,*” so that the compilation of acts during that period of thirteen different assemblies, (with a few exceptions mentioned by your Lordship) “ *does not contain a single statute, which carries within itself any reasonable security for the faithful execution of its provisions,*” or, in other words, that the whole legislative code relating to Slavery, subsequent to the resolutions of 1823, is one system of subterfuge and evasion.

My Lord, it is not to my purpose to enter into a nice legal criticism of the qualities of an Act of Parliament ; but from the manner in which your Lordship makes the assertion, if not from the absolute probability of the thing itself, I trust I shall not offend your Lordship, if I should assume it to be possible, that you may have come to an erroneous conclusion upon matters, with which your Lordship cannot but be imperfectly acquainted ; but, at all events, there are in this country persons well conversant with Colonial legislation, who will be both able and willing to set your Lordship right on this point, which, as it appears to me, strikes at the very root, not

only of the intelligence, but also of the very honesty and integrity of every Colonial legislature. Now, my Lord, even assuming your Lordship's assertion to be correct, I shall still maintain, that the introduction of it in a Dispatch addressed to the Colonial Assemblies, and which would necessarily be circulated throughout the different Colonies, was most injudicious.

Now, lest there should be any misapprehension, as to the sources, to which this "*deficiency of quality*" in the Colonial code is to be attributed, your Lordship proceeds further as follows:—" *I am willing to give to the Colonial legislatures the same credit for upright intentions, which is claimed for those, who discharge corresponding functions in this country; but I should sacrifice truth to an unmeaning and ill-timed compliment, were I to attribute to the members of those bodies that freedom from prejudice and dispassionate self-possession on the subject of slavery, or that skill in the technical business of legislation, without which the most honest intentions are totally inadequate to the production of an effective law.*" So that, my Lord, *prejudice*, and the *want of self-possession on the subject of slavery*, and of *skill in the technical business of legislation*, are the sources of this "*deficiency in quality.*" Now it cannot fail to strike your Lordship, that these two influential causes bear a distinct and opposite character to each other; and by your Lordship's having made use of the disjunctive copulative "*or,*" I pre-



sume that the “*deficiency*” in quality is attributable sometimes to one, and sometimes to the other of these causes.

It is evident, that your Lordship has cautiously worded the passage last referred to, in order, if possible, to make it appear, that nothing offensive was intended by it, and which particularly appears by the terms “*deficiency in quality*” and “*self-possession* ;” expressions, which, as it appears to me, are too refined to convey your Lordship’s real meaning.

Now, my Lord, if it were stated that an individual had laboured under a *freedom* from *dispassionate self-possession* for eight years on any subject, what would be said of him, but that he was mad upon that particular subject, and therefore not accountable for his actions : but were it said, that the members of a legislature had for eight years laboured under the influence of *prejudice* and of *freedom from self-possession on the subject of slavery*, and in the performance of their duty as legislators had framed laws for the regulation of slavery, which contained no defect in the provisions themselves, but a *deficiency of quality* in the very acts themselves, by which those provisions became mere waste paper, there being no *reasonable security for the faithful execution of them*, would it not be said, my Lord, that the members of that legislature, by the omission of that security, had intentionally destroyed the efficacy of their own



law; or, in other words, that they had been guilty of an evasion, for which they ought to be impeached? So that, my Lord, you have, unintentionally, as I must presume, cast a stigma both on their motives and their understandings.

It would appear further, my Lord, that this stigma is rather aggravated by your second charge, as to their want of skill in the *technical business of legislation*, to which is in part to be attributed the want of that reasonable *security for the faithful execution of the provisions* of their Acts of Parliament. The charge, it is true, in its terms, leaves their motives untouched, and if it applied to such *technicalities*, which might “*reasonably*” be presumed to have occurred from inadvertence, or, if your Lordship pleases, *from want of skill*, might have passed unobserved: but when the want of skill in the technicalities of legislation is applied to the actual omission of a *reasonable security for the faithful execution of the provisions* of a law, that is, to a deficiency in the very essence of it, would the plea of ignorance be admitted, even if the Members of the Houses of Assembly were disposed to shelter themselves under it? It would naturally be asked, did the acts of those legislatures, prior to the year 1823, betray the same want of skill in the *technicalities* of legislation; and in the island of Jamaica more especially, has not the House of Assembly, for a long antecedent period, had the advantage of the able assistance

of Mr. Bullock, whose experience must have placed the acts of that legislature at least beyond the reach of objection, on the score of “*want of skill in technicalities?*” The important omission, which is dwelt upon with so much earnestness by your Lordship, must consequently be attributed to the first of the sources stated by your Lordship, viz. to *prejudice*, and *their freedom from dispassionate self-possession on the subject of slavery*.

But whatever may be the opinion of your Lordship, or of his Majesty’s Government, as to the existence of this vital imperfection in the Colonial Statutes, the fact is certain, that many Enactments of the different Colonial Legislatures, since the year 1823, wholly distinct from those relating to “Slave Evidence,” which are in some instances excepted from your Lordship’s sweeping censure, have not only at different periods received the unqualified approbation of his Majesty’s Government, but are at this time, by virtue of the Royal Assent, in practical operation.—(See *Appendix*.)

The next passage in the Dispatch, to which I would call your Lordship’s attention, is that, wherein, referring to the resolutions of Mr. Canning, it is stated, that the pledges were given with the *concurrence of the West India body*. Though at this late period the question, as to the assent of the West Indian body to those resolutions, may probably appear to be of little moment, that is, as between that body and the Government; yet, as

between the former and their Colonial legislatures, the case is different, as your Lordship will at once perceive; since they will infer, from the circumstance of that concurrence being (as I believe it to be) now for the first time introduced into a Dispatch from the Colonial Office, that your Lordship considers it to be of some importance, in justification of the course of coercive measures, which the Government, "*with so much reluctance,*" are about to adopt; I therefore feel, that I cannot allow the passage to remain unnoticed.

Now, my Lord, when I read in every line of your Lordship's Dispatch an anxiety to conciliate and to sooth, if possible, the irritation, which has manifested itself in the discussions of these subjects in the Colonial Assemblies, it appears to me, that, whether that concurrence were or not a fact, the very insertion of it in a Dispatch to the Colonial legislatures was at least uncalled for, not to say injudicious, with reference more particularly to your Lordship's professed object of conciliation. What effect, may I ask your Lordship, would be likely to be produced on the minds of the members of those legislatures, who have been characterised as the contumacious opponents of His Majesty's Government, as well as the uncompromising defenders of their privileges and their rights, when it was communicated to them officially by your Lordship, that a set of resolutions,—whereby His Majesty's Government are pledged, as they have now declared themselves to be, to

wrest from them what proportion they may think fit of the legislative jurisdiction in matters appertaining to the local government of the Colonies, which they have exercised, uninterruptedly and exclusively, from a remote period, and to transfer it to the King in Council,—had received the concurrence of the West Indian body in England? My Lord, I might be chargeable with a want of the respect, which I am most anxious to observe towards your Lordship, were I to assert in plain terms, that the fact would not be believed in the Colonies; but if the members of those legislative assemblies are composed, as your Lordship intimates, of such inflammable materials, might not the assertion, and their disbelief of this one fact alone, produce stormy debates, *symptoms of a disposition to refuse to enter into discussion at all on the measures so submitted to them*, nay, even, my Lord, *to reject them without the form of respect?* The assertion of the fact, my Lord, might, moreover, have the tendency to create a schism between the Colonial Legislatures and the West Indian body, or at least to weaken the confidence, which ought mutually to subsist between them, both as it regards the furtherance of the measures of his Majesty's Government, and the effectual amelioration of the slave population. But, my Lord, may I be permitted to ask your Lordship, whether you have satisfied yourself as to the fact of this *concurrence of the West Indian Body*; since, after the positive manner in which



your Lordship asserts the fact, it is quite impossible for me to give it as positive a denial; and to expect me to be able to prove the direct negative would be rather unreasonable. But, as a member of that West Indian body, I hope I may stand excused when I affirm, that I have not been able to find any minute or resolution recorded in their proceedings, stating the concurrence of that body to those resolutions; I might, perhaps, assert with confidence, that they were never formally submitted to the consideration of the West Indian body. It is very probable, that Mr. Canning may have communicated his intended resolutions to certain individuals of that body, sometime previous to the debate on Mr. Buxton's resolutions in 1823; but whatever opinion these individuals may have given on the expediency of recognising those of Mr. Canning, they were in nowise authorized to commit the West Indian body on a point, which was at that time of so much delicacy and importance. But, my Lord, I recollect, that early in the year 1830, in consequence of an intimation to the West Indian body of a rumour having got abroad here and in some of the West Indian colonies, that a concurrence had been indirectly given by the West Indian body both to the resolutions of 1823 and the measure of compulsory manumission, the subject was brought under the consideration of the West Indian Body, and, with the view to remove any misconception either



here or in the Colonies, and more particularly to prevent any misunderstanding or want of confidence and cordiality between the West Indian body and the Colonial Legislatures, it was thought highly expedient, as a most important regulation, viz. that of compulsory manumission, had been then recommended by his Majesty's Government to the Colonial Legislatures, to pass the following amongst other Resolutions: Marquis of Chandos in the chair: "24th of Feb. 1830—That this body, identified in interest with the Colonial Legislatures, and placing implicit confidence in their proceedings, recognize in those measures, which they have adopted for the improvement of the slave population, that humane disposition, as well as that local experience, and that practical observation, without which any plans of amelioration would be no less injurious to the Slaves themselves, than to the Proprietors.

"That the West India body repeat the declaration that they have never, directly nor indirectly, authorized or concurred in any measure having for its object compulsory manumission of the Slaves in the West India Colonies; and they continue of opinion, that such a measure would be highly inexpedient, and that it is *even* inconsistent with the Resolutions of Parliament of 1823, being, in their opinion, opposed both to the civilization and welfare of the Slaves, and to the interests and rights of property in the Colonies."

These Resolutions were published in the “ Abstract of the British West Indian Statutes for the protection and government of Slaves,” which, as I presume, was forwarded in due course to the Colonial Office. I have thus detailed to your Lordship all the information, which I have been able to obtain on this point ; I feel it unnecessary to make any further comment upon it, but leave it to your Lordship and the public, to draw the conclusion, how far these resolutions may bring in question the accuracy of your Lordship’s assertion on a point, which, but for the reasons which I have given, would be of little or no importance.

The next passage in the Dispatch, to which I presume to call your Lordship’s attention, is that, wherein it is stated, that the Government had *no alternative but to proceed either by pressing measures of a stronger nature than mere injunction, or by desisting altogether from the promotion of an object, to which Parliament is not less justly than solemnly pledged, and the postponement of which is tending more and more every day to precipitate a powerful Party in this country in the opposite extreme, which no one, who is conversant with the influence of public opinion in this country, and the direction of it upon the subject of Slavery, could fail to see.*

I must confess, my Lord, that I have perused this passage with alarm and dismay, since it appears to me to evince not only a want of firmness on the part of his Majesty’s Government, but to

be in effect an actual surrender of the duties and functions of the entire Colonial Government into the hands of a *powerful party*. Your Lordship may possibly lament the postponement of the measures of amelioration, both as it may affect the pledges, by which the King's Government are supposed to be bound, as well as the interests and even the security of the Colonies themselves; but was it becoming the character of your Lordship, as his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, thus officially to announce, as a reason for substituting, without further delay, measures of coercion for those of recommendation, your apprehension of a *powerful Party* being *precipitated in the opposite extreme*? I do not presume, my Lord, to set up my judgment against that of your Lordship, or of his Majesty's Government, and perhaps I may be too interested an observer of all that passes; but it appears to me, that, whatever may be the decision of his Majesty's Government, as to the expediency of carrying into effect the Order in Council, to which your Lordship's Dispatch refers, the very moment, that it was discovered, that a *powerful party* was urging, by every kind of artifice and enthusiastic excitement, measures in the *opposite extreme*, it became the duty of a wise and just Government to have made a stand; knowing, as they must, that the spirit of excitement feeds on concession, and becomes more impetuous with every advantage it gains.

Such a display of wisdom, firmness, and determination, together with the exposure of the ultimate object of this *powerful party* in its naked deformity, which would thus have been effected with all the force and influence of his Majesty's Government, would not only have spread consternation in their ranks, but would have created such a diversion in what your Lordship calls, though I cannot admit it to be, the public opinion, that his Majesty's Government would thenceforward have been enabled, in the spirit of Mr. Canning's resolutions, to pursue their course of gradual and effective amelioration securely and uninterruptedly.

Have you not, my Lord, may I be permitted to ask, by this very passage, unintentionally I have no doubt, identified his Majesty's Government with the extravagance and absurdities of the Abolitionists, and abandoned the Colonists, as well as the Slave population, to all the fatal effects of those precipitate measures, to which, in open defiance of Mr. Canning's resolutions, the whole energy of the "*powerful party*," to which you refer, is unceasingly directed? Does not your Lordship, may I ask, by the pointed reference to the influence of "*public opinion*," in this passage, virtually identify his Majesty's Government with the "*powerful party*," since, if the public opinion takes its direction from their's, they become more or less one and the same party? But I put it fairly to your



Lordship, whether the public opinion, that is, the opinion of the reasonable and unprejudiced part of the community, setting aside popular clamour, does in reality go along with the “ *powerful party* ?”

Public opinion, my Lord, abhors Slavery in the abstract ; so do the Colonists. Public opinion desires its gradual but final extinction ; so do the Colonists themselves : but the powerful party disdains all compromise, and in defiance of all regard to justice, or even humanity itself, are prepared to urge the Government to immediate emancipation, with a reckless indifference to consequences.

I do not accuse his Majesty’s Government, my Lord, of having intentionally identified their measures with the wild and visionary theories of the Abolitionists, but I appeal to them, whether, from the moment they ceased to stem the tide, they were not irresistibly carried along with them down the same impetuous current of enthusiasm ?

*Non aliter quam si adverso vix flumine lembum  
Remigiis subigit, si brachia forte remisit,  
Atque illum in præceps prono rapit alveus amni.*

I need not remind your Lordship, that the abolition of the Slave Trade gave the death blow to slavery itself, and laid the foundation of the great fabric of emancipation. From that moment the interests of the planter and the slave began to go hand in hand, and that social link was formed, of a mutual dependence on each other, which could



not fail to operate beneficially to the comfort and happiness of both, and, in course of time, to accomplish more rationally and more effectually, than any arbitrary interference of the legislature, the final extinction of slavery.

Man, my Lord, is too much the creature of self-interest; and however unwilling we may be to acknowledge this imperfection in our moral constitution, it is undoubtedly the best security for his performance even of what may be deemed acts of duty.

Do I then complain, my Lord, of the Government, for wishing to ameliorate the condition of the negro? Do I arraign their measures, because they originate in feelings of humanity?

I answer, No, my Lord. The Colonist is not less alive to those feelings than his Majesty's Government, and measures of real and practical amelioration must operate equally for the benefit of proprietor and slave: but, my Lord, I feel that I have a right to complain of the measures of Government, upon the ground, that they are adapted rather to the state of society which existed in the West Indies at a period when the Slave Trade was in full activity, and when the proprietor had less interest in the comfort and well-being of the slaves; because they tend at once to sever that happy bond of mutual interest and mutual dependence, which by the Abolition had been so auspiciously established; and,

moreover, because his Majesty's Government, by arrogating to themselves the character and functions of proprietor, have, in effect, converted the latter, nay, even the Colonial Legislatures, into mere Overseers of the properties.

Is this, my Lord, I ask you, an overcharged picture? Can it, I appeal to you, be expected of the negro, that he should henceforward look up to his master for protection, or that he should any longer show him his wonted attachment, or even render him his obedience, when he is given to understand, that it is to the Government, and not to the proprietor, that he is indebted for the very herring which he puts into his mouth? Depend upon it, my Lord, if nature, or rather the wise ordinances of Providence, are allowed to take their course, the final consummation of the extinction of slavery must take place, and at the very time too, when the negro will have so far advanced in civilization and religious instruction, as to be in the condition to profit by the boon; till which time, freedom would be rather a curse, than a blessing to him. Under all the circumstances, therefore, my Lord, it appears to me, that your Lordship would have acted the more cautious and prudent part, with reference to this great question, had your Lordship abstained from all allusion to the influence of *public opinion* or of *a powerful party*; since it could only have the effect of giving a strong impulse to the energies

of that already too-powerful party, and must thereby not only prevent the calm and dispassionate consideration of any measures of amelioration, but precipitate those energies in *the opposite extreme*.

But why, may I be permitted further to ask your Lordship, does it follow that his Majesty's Government should be driven to the *alternative of desisting altogether from the prosecution of an object to which Parliament is not less justly than solemnly pledged*, in the event of their thinking it expedient to forbear to proceed by *proposing measures of a stronger nature than mere injunction*? Did Mr. Canning himself venture to calculate the period when the object of his resolutions might be expected to be realized? Is not the religious and moral instruction, by which the negro population are to be prepared for the state of freedom that awaits them, going on? And are not the Houses of Assembly, together with the proprietors of estates resident in the several islands, as well as in this country, uniting their very powerful aid towards its general and successful operation? Wherefore then, my Lord, should his Majesty's Government anticipate, that their future endeavours to ameliorate the condition of that population should be unavailing?

Your Lordship, in truth, labours to justify the adoption of arbitrary and coercive measures, by the assertion, which has been so often controverted

by the West Indian body and the Colonial agents, that nothing has been done towards slave amelioration for a period of eight years, and that from that circumstance alone, it were in vain to expect, that any thing would be effected for the future by measures of recommendation and conciliation. That acts of amelioration have been passed, cannot be disputed; but then your Lordship will say, that they are one and all *deficient in that quality which carries within itself any reasonable security for the faithful execution of their provisions*. I will not, my Lord, for the reasons which I have before given, pursue this point farther. The solemn inquiry before the House of Lords will be directed to this important point, and their report will not only determine beyond dispute what has in reality been done, but it may also recommend to his Majesty's Government such a course of policy towards the West Indian Colonies, as, in the spirit of Mr. Canning's Resolutions, may keep alike in view the interests of the proprietor and slave.

The next passage to which I would take the liberty of requesting your Lordship's attention is that wherein you state, "*That a measure of fiscal regulation, so devised as to be productive of real and substantial relief, has appeared to be the only constitutional method within the power of his Majesty's Government to propose, which would in some degree meet the exigencies of the West Indian commercial in-*



*terests ; but to offer such an advantage to the planters, without at the same time taking any security for their acceptance of the measure on behalf of the slaves, would be, if not directly inconsistent with the Parliamentary Resolutions of 1823, at least an abandonment, and even reversal of the policy of the Executive Government resulting from those resolutions."*

Now, my Lord, I should in the first place observe, that it appears to me, that your Lordship has been here led into an inconsistency, by confounding the Colonial Legislatures with the planter, when you require them, that is, the planters, to give a security for the acceptance of the measures on behalf of the slave, which is exclusively within the province of the Legislatures ; and indeed, after an attentive perusal of the latter part of your Lordship's Dispatch, I think I might impute to his Majesty's Government a direct departure from their feelings of sympathy towards the Colonists, for the very purpose, as it would appear, of extorting from the Colonial Legislatures, at this period of unprecedented distress, an acquiescence in their Order of Council of December 2, 1831, to which they might otherwise deem it inexpedient to give the force of law in their respective Colonies ; or am I to infer from the dictatorial and threatening tone, which pervades your Lordship's Dispatch, that, in deference to the authority of public opinion or of a *powerful party*, it has become indispensable that no time should be lost,



in endeavouring to effect by menace, what you may hereafter fail to accomplish by means of legislation ? If, moreover, my Lord, the boon which is to be proffered to the planter, in exchange for the passing into a law the Order of Council of December 2, by the Colonial Legislatures (for I consider a punishment, in case of refusal, equivalent to a bribe to accept) is not yet matured in its details, and if in truth it is to be proposed only to Parliament after the other financial arrangements of 1832 (rather an indefinite period after the experience of last year) shall have been completed ; and if Parliament should pronounce, as I have no doubt they will, the imposition of a tax, for the purpose of punishment, to be vicious in principle as well as arbitrary, unconstitutional and unjust, and, therefore, not to be sanctioned for an instant : if again, the proposal of his Majesty's Government to Parliament should, on reconsideration, be so remodelled, as to receive the sanction of our legislature at a late period of the session ; and if, perchance, the Houses of Assembly should reply to your Dispatch—" You ask of us to do what we consider to be inconsistent with our duty ; you propose to give us an advantageous consideration for our acquiescence, without adverting to the extent, or even to the nature of it, and which consideration is, forsooth, to be contingent on your measure being sanctioned by the legislature in England ; with all

due respect therefore to the authority of the King in Council, we shall deem it more consistent with the dignity and independence of our legislatures; to postpone the discussion of your Order in Council, so that the Act of Parliament may at the same time be submitted to our consideration."

If, then, the boon to be thus proffered is to be made dependent on such a variety of circumstances, over which he has no controul, (for I appeal to your Lordship's impartial judgment, whether the contingency, to which I have adverted in the first place, is improbable, and, in the second, whether a reply in terms somewhat to the purport of those, which I have anticipated, from the Colonial Assemblies, may not reasonably be expected, without subjecting them to the charge of contumacy and disrespect towards his Majesty's Government,) need I ask your Lordship what is in the mean time to become of the planter?

The delay occasioned by the result of either of these contingencies, may, it is true, as between the mother-country and the Colonies, be comparatively of trifling import: but if in the critical situation in which he is already placed, with the means of relief now confessedly within the reach of his Majesty's Government, the planter is still to be made to wait the result of all, which I have here ventured to anticipate, I should say, he would do wisely to resign himself to his fate, and abandon his property.

Times of distress, my Lord, may facilitate the exaction of submission; but it cannot be the duty of a liberal government of a free country like this, to act upon a principle, which can be applicable only to the exercise of the most arbitrary power; but in the case, which we are now considering, my Lord, the time of distress, independently of all such considerations, is the most unseasonable that could be selected for the attainment of your object by coercive measures, which I will endeavour to prove, by reasoning from your Lordship's Dispatch.

If the course of *authoritative admonition, which has been pursued for eight years* (during a great portion of which your Lordship will bear in mind the West Indian Interests were enjoying a comparative prosperity) has been already unsuccessful; if the Houses of Assembly have been ill judged in their opposition, and if the members of them are not free from *prejudice on the subject* of Slavery, let me ask your Lordship, whether your Dispatch is calculated to work the miracle of their instantaneous conversion?

If I might venture to offer an opinion, as to the source of the irritation, which has manifested itself in the discussions of these Colonial Assemblies, I should say, that it has arisen, not from *prejudice and freedom from dispassionate self-possession*, but from a jealousy of their independence, of which they are impressed, how-

ever erroneously, that it has been the policy of the mother-country virtually to deprive them. Your Lordship needs not to be informed, that the members of those assemblies, though they may be contumacious and intemperate at times, are not deficient either in talent or shrewdness. They feel and know their independence, and can calculate pretty well their own strength, as well as the power of their adversary. I would therefore again take the liberty of asking your Lordship, how a member of the House of Assembly (of Jamaica for instance) would be likely to reason on this part of your Dispatch? Might he not say, “ the Dispatch is full of affected conciliation and guarded threatenings; though his Lordship does us the honour to compliment our motives, he still treats us as men devoid of understanding, and as objects of the distrust and suspicion of his Majesty’s government. What can the relief of the West Indian body, under their unparalleled distress, have to do with measures of slave amelioration? To grant relief, is exclusively the province of his Majesty’s government; to make laws for the interior regulation of the Colonies, is our’s. If on every application by the West Indian body, they are to be told, they can have no relief unless the Colonial legislatures will give every order in council, which his Majesty’s government may think it expedient to issue, the force of law, we are no longer a deliberative assembly ;



there is an end at once of the independence of our legislatures." May he not, my Lord, further argue, "now that his Majesty's government have pushed matters to this extremity, the real question is, What can they do? We know, as well as his Lordship, though he purposely keeps it out of sight in his Dispatch, the value of the Colonies to the mother-country, and it is admitted by his Lordship, that his Majesty's government *entertain the strongest feelings of sympathy and compassion for the distress, under which all persons connected with West Indian property are indiscriminately suffering*; will they then risk the utter destruction of those interests, and the consequent loss of the Colonies, for the sake of an experiment to force upon us some trifling measures of Slave amelioration? The attempt to *combine the two great objects in a single measure* may appear very plausible and ingenious, but it is the only sure way of producing the failure of both; whilst the *making the one contingent on the other* is manifestly arbitrary and unjust towards the planter. Let then his Majesty's government relieve the proprietor, as they acknowledge they have the means of doing, and we will afterwards take into consideration any measure, which may be recommended to us for the amelioration of the slave population." I put it to your Lordship, whether there would be any thing contumacious or even unreasonable in this mode of arguing; nay, more, whether it is not



the language, which a member of the House of Assembly would be likely to hold on such an occasion; and in such case, I leave your Lordship to apply the consequences to the West Indian proprietor, to whom *substantial relief* is promised on the fulfilment only of a condition, with which it is manifestly out of his power to comply.

There is but one other passage in your Lordship's Dispatch, on which I shall take the liberty to remark, and, for obvious reasons, but very slightly; but in justice to the Colonial Legislature of Jamaica, I cannot pass it altogether unnoticed. Your Lordship little contemplated what was so soon to happen in that ill-fated island, when you addressed the Colonial Legislatures generally in the solemn language of almost prophetic warning, with which your Dispatch concludes. With great deference to your Lordship, I should have considered such an appeal at any time altogether uncalled for and injudicious; since it cannot but be known to your Lordship, what are the feelings of some of the Colonial Assemblies, and more particularly of that of Jamaica, on the subject of the spirit of disaffection and insubordination amongst the slaves, which had preceded the fatal explosion, which we have had so recently to deplore; and your Lordship may, by the very earnestness of your appeal, have sowed the seeds of yet further discord and irritation towards his Majesty's government. Now that a disaster of the

character, to which I presume your Lordship must have adverted, has befallen that island, it is, I fear, but too probable, that some at least of the members of that assembly may feel a jealousy, lest that passage of your Lordship's Dispatch may have brought their legislature under the imputation, of having been in some degree accessory to that calamity.

As a proprietor of an estate in that island, which has fallen a victim to its ravages, I do not venture, whatever may be my impression, to pronounce an opinion, as to the source to which that disaster is to be attributed; but so far as my humble testimony can avail, though they stand little in need of any justification, I feel bound to say, that the legislature of that island is altogether absolved.

There is a circumstance also, my Lord, to which I must very shortly advert, connected with that melancholy disaster, which those who have been the sufferers from it, and indeed the public at large, must regret, and which has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

Your Lordship is aware, that early in the last year, it had been known in this country, that a very mistaken impression had by some means insinuated itself into the minds of the negroes in Jamaica, that orders had been sent out by his Majesty's government to emancipate them, and the consequence was, as might have been expected, that they became unsettled and discontented—

Representations were made to his Majesty's government on the subject, I believe, by the Agent of the island (Mr. Burge), followed by intreaties, that they would take any step, which they might think most expedient, to correct so dangerous and mistaken an impression, since by Government alone could it be corrected.

On reading the Gazette Extraordinary of February 22d last, in which the details of the insurrection were given, I found the copy of a Proclamation of the King in Council, bearing date June 3d, reciting the representations (I need not trouble your Lordship with this part of the Proclamation at length) as *above*, "*and that the slaves had been erroneously led to believe, that orders had been sent out by us for their emancipation, and that such belief has produced acts of insubordination: We, therefore, &c. &c. &c.; and we hereby charge and command all our Governors to give the fullest publicity to this our Proclamation.* Now, it appears that publicity was not given to this Proclamation in the island of Jamaica till December 22d, or five days before the breaking out of the insurrection, as appears by a letter from Mr. Bullock of the same date, which accompanied his transmission of it to the custodes of the several parishes in that island, and which letter begins with this remarkable passage: *His Excellency the Governor having received intelligence, that a disposition to insubordination had manifested itself amongst certain slaves on*

*a plantation in St. James, his Excellency no longer hesitates to give every possible publicity to his Majesty's Proclamation, which the uninterrupted tranquillity, that has hitherto prevailed throughout the Island, had not seemed to render necessary.* I purposely abstain, my Lord, from speculating upon the effect, which might have been produced, had publicity been given to this Proclamation, on its reaching Jamaica, as I presume, some time in the month of July; but I think I may be permitted to ask, why the publication of a document of a purely preventive nature, which was considered necessary on June 3d, to remove so dangerous and erroneous an impression, and to which the fullest publicity is therein directed to be given, was delayed till the 22d of December? Upon the extraordinary delay in the publication of this important document, my Lord, I make no comment; your Lordship can, if you think it proper, best give the explanation.

These are the remarks, my Lord, which I have taken the liberty to address to your Lordship, on the subject of the Dispatch of December 10. May I, in conclusion, be permitted to ask your Lordship, what is really the ulterior object of your Dispatch, and what course his Majesty's Government have determined to pursue, in the event of these refractory parties in the Colonies not yielding implicit obedience to the strict letter of your Lordship's mandate? Is it by carrying even into



effect the awful denunciation of new tariffs on sugar and rum, that your Lordship expects to force them to submission? Such a measure, my Lord, however it might expedite the impending ruin of the planter, could only tend to exasperate the Colonial legislatures; and your recommendatory measures of slave amelioration, which your Lordship complains have been so long *postponed*, must be thereby indefinitely suspended. It would appear, however, that this arbitrary procedure by fiscal regulations, is an expedient, conceived in mercy towards the planter, *after the most anxious and painful attention of his Majesty's Government to the increasing commercial distress of the West Indian interests*, and that it is moreover the *only course of policy short of the direct application of power, through which there has ever been a prospect of redeeming the pledges contained in the resolutions of 1823*. But, my Lord, has it occurred to his Majesty's Government to consider and determine, if this course should fail, as fail it must, what are to be the further measures, to which they must then have recourse, since, as it appears from your Lordship's Dispatch, their only remaining alternative would be the *direct application of power*? But does your Lordship, or his Majesty's Government, really imagine, that by the forcible dispersion of the Colonial Legislatures, they will have advanced one step further towards the accomplishment of slave amelioration? Assuming, my Lord, for an instant, by



the latter means, his Majesty's Government, or a *powerful party*, to have the undisturbed possession of the Colonies, and to be enabled (the legislatures and the proprietor being thus put out of sight) to carry their own measures in their own way—on whom then is to devolve the execution of the mandate contained in your Lordship's Dispatch? Are the interests of the proprietor, he would naturally ask, to be entirely overlooked, on what in fact would he then have to depend?

The relation of master and slave being dissolved, would it be presumptuous in him, were he to ask of his Majesty's Government, whether it is their intention to proceed by taking possession of his lands, and making him a reasonable compensation, or by calling in aid the influence of a *powerful party* to apply the system, which has operated so beneficially on the Crown property in Demerara?

But, my Lord, I dare not speculate further on this subject. Our prospects are indeed awful. The Colonies are on the verge of a precipice. It is not, however, yet too late to save them, if his Majesty's Government will show a vigour and determination proportionate to the danger. It is not, my Lord, by threatening Dispatches, by fiscal regulations, or by the *direct application of power*, that measures of slave amelioration are to be carried, or the great work of emancipation finally accomplished; but by the exercise of a

safe, prudent, and sound discretion on the part of his Majesty's Government, and, in the true spirit of Mr. Canning's resolutions, by their never losing sight of that leading and unerring principle, that whatever is to be done for the benefit of the slave, must be done through his master. Let me, above all, implore his Majesty's Government, as they wish to act uprightly and conscientiously, to throw off the shackles of a *powerful party*, who are *precipitating measures in the opposite extreme*, and who, in the yet more emphatic language of your Lordship's Dispatch, are bringing the Colonies daily *more and more within the danger of calamities*, far more grievous *than any which can be caused by commercial reverses, and of disasters, from which it may be beyond the power of any Government to protect them.*

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

A MEMBER OF THE WEST INDIAN BODY.

LONDON:

C. ROWORTH AND SONS, BELL YARD,  
TEMPLE BAR.

## APPENDIX.

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EXTRACTS FROM A PUBLICATION, ENTITLED "AN ABSTRACT OF THE BRITISH WEST INDIAN STATUTES FOR THE PROTECTION AND GOVERNMENT OF SLAVES."—(James Ridgway, 1830.)

### *Barbados.*

IN a dispatch, dated 18th October, 1827, Mr. Secretary Huskisson remarks, that the above "Act contains unequal advances to a better system of law, of which his Majesty is graciously pleased to mark his approbation by its allowance."

### *St. Vincent.*

UPON the consolidated Slave Law of St. Vincent, which received the royal assent March 14, 1827, the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, in a letter addressed to the Governor of that settlement, dated 3d April, 1827, remarks:—

"His Majesty has observed with satisfaction the progress made by these enactments in the measures to be taken for the improvement of the state of the slave population." "Upon a review of the whole of this law, I am commanded by his Majesty to express his satisfaction with the general disposition of the Council and Assembly to adopt the recommendations which have been addressed to them on this important subject."

*Grenada.*

In a dispatch of Secretary Sir George Murray, dated 8th June, 1829, he characterizes the Assembly of Grenada as "A Colonial Legislature, which has honourably distinguished itself in the improvement of the Slave Code."

*Dominica.*

In a dispatch of the 3d April, 1827, Lord Bathurst makes the following remarks to Governor Nicolay, respecting a bill "For the further encouragement, protection, and better government of slaves, and the general amelioration of their condition," which the Legislature of the Island passed in 1826, and which on the 3d April, 1827, received the royal assent.

"His Majesty is graciously pleased to acknowledge with commendation the disposition which the Legislature of Dominica have manifested, in many of the provisions of these acts, to improve the condition of the slave population; and, considering that they are in general framed in such a manner as to promote the well-being of that class of society, his Majesty has, with the advice of his Privy Council, been pleased to confirm them."

*St. Christopher.*

On an Act "For further improving the condition of the slave population in the island of St. Christopher," which received the royal assent on the 18th March, 1829, Mr. Secretary Huskisson observes, in a dispatch dated March 7, 1828, (the remarks which he makes on the provisions on the subject of Slave Evidence being here omitted,) "This act is remarkable for the wisdom and humanity of the greater part of its provisions."

*Bahamas.*

On the Act of the Bahamas Legislature, passed in December, 1826, and confirmed by his Majesty on the 5th March, 1828, "To amend, consolidate, and bring into one act, the several laws relating to Slaves, and for giving them further protection and security," Mr. Huskisson observes, in a dispatch dated the 5th March, 1818, that "he is commanded by His Majesty to express his very

“gracious approbation of the disposition which the Legislature of the Bahama Islands have manifested to acquiesce in so large a proportion of the suggestions, which were made by his command, for the improvement of the condition of the Slave population of the colony.”

*Demerara and Essequibo.*

On “An ordinance for the religious instruction of Slaves in his Majesty’s colonies of Demerara and Essequibo, and for the improvement of their condition,” which was passed by the Court of Policy of those colonies, and sanctioned by His Majesty’s government in July, 1825, Earl Bathurst, in a dispatch dated 9th July, 1825, announces to the governor, “I am commanded by His Majesty to direct you to signify to the Court of Policy his approbation of the zeal with which they have proceeded to give effect to his wishes, as explained by me in my dispatch of the 20th November, 1824; and you will assure the members of the court that His Majesty has been pleased to receive with great satisfaction this mark of their disposition to meliorate the condition and elevate the character of the slaves under their protection.”

*Berbice.*

Upon the provisions of an Ordinance of the Governor and Council of this Colony, entitled, “An Ordinance for promoting the Religious Instruction, and bettering the condition of the Slave Population,” Lord Bathurst, in his dispatch to the Lieutenant-Governor, of the 26th December, 1826, remarks, “I am to desire that you will convey to this Court the sense which His Majesty entertains of the highly praiseworthy manner in which they have applied themselves to the subjects which have been brought under their consideration.”







A  
VINDICATION  
OF A  
LOAN OF £15, 000, 000  
TO THE  
WEST INDIA PLANTERS,

SHEWING THAT IT MAY NOT ONLY BE LENT WITH PERFECT SAFETY, BUT WITH  
IMMENSE ADVANTAGE BOTH TO THE WEST INDIANS AND  
TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

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BY JAMES CROPPER.

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1833.



## VINDICATION OF A LOAN, &c.

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To afford relief to the West India Planters by means of a loan would be highly advantageous, the security of which would be unquestionable, if emancipation is complete; and if it were never repaid, we should give them a benefit four times the amount of what it would cost the country, and it would surely be an excellent substitute for the relief now afforded by a Bounty on the exportation of refined Sugar. The latter, by operating in a way directly the contrary, costs *twice*, nay, perhaps, in all its effects, four times as much as the benefit it confers on the planters. But how much soever the loan may be approved by all who have paid attention to the subject, the proposed mode of repayment merits no less condemnation.

In that proposition it is assumed, that to make a change from Slavery to Freedom, from a system the worst and most expensive, to one the best and most economical, must necessarily be attended with loss, and require compensation. What would the British Manufacturers, who are daily making improvements in their manufactures, say to such a proposition as this? Would they think of asking for a compensation for old and exploded machinery when they are about to substitute it with better? It is absurd to presume beforehand that such an improvement must be attended with loss, and highly unjust to lay the burden of this assumed, but unproved, loss on the only innocent party.

If Slavery is only to be exchanged for apprenticeship, the substitution of magisterial for the arbitrary power of the master, will doubtless be an improvement in the condition of the Slaves; but slender will be the stimulus of hope, if its only object is freedom *at the end of twelve long years*; what effect can we expect to produce on minds so uncultivated as those of the Negro race, who, in general, can only be influenced by reaping, *at once*, the fruits of their exertion in adequate wages!



In the absence of this stimulus, no prospect of advantage at the end of twelve years can be expected to be more effective than the present system of coercion. From what source then is the Slave to re-pay the loan as a part of the price of his redemption? If no more labour is obtained from him, and if a portion of that labour is to be applied in reduction of the loan, his master's situation will be rendered worse. Under this plan, neither the planter nor the Slave will have the means of re-payment. Before the planter can do it, his situation must be improved—either by cheapening the cost of production, or by raising the price of Sugar to the British consumer. The first can only be effected by the introduction of a better system—a system which will be more productive to the master. Will long apprenticeships be more profitable to him than the plan he at present pursues? If it will not, what then will be the result of this attempt to charge the price of redemption, or the re-payment of the loan upon the Slaves, if it is first extracted from the master's present scanty and insufficient means; and in the end, is charged upon the people of England in an increased price of their Sugar, which can only be obtained by the continuance and even extension of the present bounty and monopoly; surely, any one who possesses any knowledge of the working of such attempts, must know, that they injure the country much more than double the amount of the benefit they confer on the party intended to be served. We need no stronger proof than the folly and absurdity of the present bounty on the exportation of refined Sugar.

The refining of Sugar for the Bounty differs from all other manufactures. It is not refined in a way to suit the consumers, but to obtain the bounty; it is not done in the best but in the worst way, for it is evident that if the treacle be taken out in this country, it will only sell for about 25s. per cwt. So much of the treacle as can be left in this inferior refined sugar will, in the first place, obtain the bounty of 36s. 10d. per cwt.; and when taken out on the Continent by a second process of refining, will also sell for the market price there, which together will be double what would have been obtained for it if the process had been perfected in this country.

The bounty on refined sugar is paid on a computation that 112lbs. of sugar yields 61lbs refined, 18lbs. of bastards, (on which there would be a drawback of 24s.,) and 28lbs. treacle—

61lbs. refined . . . . .	}	20s. 1d.
drawback . . 36s. 10d.		
18lbs. bastards . . . . .		3s. 10d.

---

23s. 11d.

The duty on the raw sugar being . . 24s. 0d.

Besides this drawback, the treacle is brought into the home market without payment of any duty, the advantage being on 28lbs. at 9s. per cwt. 2s. 3d.; and this would be the whole of the bounty on 1 cwt. of raw sugar, if no more than 61lbs. was produced.

The West India merchants say, (in a statement in which they oppose the refining of Brazil sugar under this drawback system,) "that 78lbs. of refined sugar was obtained from 112lbs. of raw sugar, by the vacuum pan process, such as sold at 84s. per cwt. in the home market, but that it required 143lbs. of British muscovado to produce 78lbs. of a similar superior quality;" that is to say, 112lbs. to produce 61lbs. A low description of refined sugar, made from British muscovado entitled to the full drawback, might at the same time be purchased at 63s. per cwt. Now, it must be evident, that if the refiner can get 61lbs. of superior refined, worth 84s. he can get a greater quantity of the low description, worth only 63s. or he would not make it. If 72lbs. of this low kind is obtained instead of 61lbs. it will add nearly 2s. 9d. to the bounty, or make it in the whole 5s., at which we believe it is underrated; for on inquiry into the relative price of Brazil and British plantation sugar, we were shewn one sample of Brazil which would have sold 5s., and another 10s. per cwt. higher, if it had been under similar circumstances to British plantation; and, therefore, in rating the bounty at 5s. per cwt., we are persuaded it is below the truth. But if the bounty raises the price to the British consumer 5s., it is far from being so much clear gain to the planter; for in order to obtain this bounty, and also in consequence of his mortgage, he is obliged to send his sugar to the British market, and to forego the advantage of a sale in the Colony, or a shipment to markets which, but for this bounty, might be more advantageous; he may also be induced by the terms of his mortgage, or the prospect of this bounty, to continue the growth of sugar, when a different culture might be more advantageous to him. (See the evidence of W. R. K. Douglas, No. 667.) Though this bounty costs the country 5s. per cwt., or more than one million per annum, yet the advantage to the planter probably does not exceed one-half that sum.\*

Charging a duty on a raw material, and allowing a bounty on a manufactured article, will generally occasion great loss to the revenue, and in no case is this more manifest than in this sugar bounty, which, holding out an inducement to make the worst article instead of the best, we may hope is near its end.

\* Though the loss to the West Indians themselves, as just explained, absorbs half the bounty, that is by no means the whole of the sacrifice which the Country

These statements are more than confirmed by an able pamphlet just published by the Brazilian Association, in which it is asserted, that the bounty on refined Sugar is 8s. per cwt. They say "taking as our data, the price at which refined Sugars have been actually selling, free on Board, to the Foreign consumer, as compared with the price paid by the Refiner to the West Indian for the raw material, the cost of the process of the manufacture being pretty well understood to be from 6s. to 7s. per cwt. If, then, the raw material costs, as shown by the *Gazette*, for the last six months, 28s. 6d., and the manufactured article is sold, *free on board*, at 26s. as the public Prices Current will show, the expense of packages and shipping expenses being, also, 1s. to 1s. 6d. per cwt. more; these incontrovertible facts are the best, and, indeed, the only basis for estimating the bounty, which, in assuming it to be 8s. still leaves 2s. to 2s. 6d. as a loss, to be borne by the Refiner, which, from his representations, I am bound to believe, has, for some time past, been the case; but should his loss not be so large, which I have no means of correctly ascertaining, then it is possible this concealed bounty may be even 9s. or 10s. There is, also, a further and large bounty on Melasses, when boiled, or converted into Bastard Sugar, the Duty on the raw material being 9s. on importation, and the drawback on the exportation of Bastard Sugar 24s. per cwt. Thus, large contracts have come within my personal knowledge, where Bastard Sugars have been delivered, free on board ship, at 10s. to 11s. per cwt., when the Boiler has paid 14s. for the Melasses from which they were manufactured, the profit of the Boiler, as well as the expenses of manufacture and shipping, being paid out of the Revenue."

If these views are correct, and I see no reason to doubt it, the bounty actually paid on what is exported, with the advance it occasions in the price of what is consumed at home, does not cost the country less than two millions, and it is doubtful, whether more than one half of this sum ever reaches the pockets of the Planters.

makes. Could the effect of the restrictions and limitations on our commerce be duly estimated, it would probably be found to exceed the benefit in a fourfold ratio.

Some fears may, however, be entertained that the admission of the Sugars of Cuba and the Brazils might increase or renew the horrors of the Slave-trade in those countries. But this may be easily provided against. If any one will take the trouble to read the "Review of a Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons on the State of the West India Colonies, ordered to be printed 13th April, 1832: Sold by J. and A. Arch, and Hatchard and Son," I trust he will be fully satisfied, that if the principles of Free Trade were applied to Sugar, there would very soon be an end to the Slave-trade, and the whole African coast would be open to our Commerce.



Before the advantages of the proposed loan can be fully shewn, we must ascertain the real cause of the distress of the West India planters, and I trust this will be no difficult task. The Colonial Secretary has followed the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons by attributing the distress to over-production. This has often been stated as the cause of distress. So late as 1825 distress extended to every trade, even the cotton manufacture, in which there is the utmost freedom, and entire absence of all protections, and which therefore stands on an almost impregnable foundation, partook of the general stagnation. This state of things was by many attributed to over-production. By what means did these cotton manufacturers *seek and find relief*? Not by lessening their productions, but by improving and cheapening their manufactures—lessening the cost, and thereby increasing the consumption; and so effectually have they done this, that in the short period of eight years the manufacture of cotton has increased about 50 per cent. and we hear no more about over-production.\*

The remedy for the alleged over-production of the West Indians is precisely the same as that of the cotton spinners, viz. by cheapening and greatly increasing the production of Sugar. This can only be effected by the immediate emancipation of the Planters from their debts, and of the Slaves from bondage; and by the introduction of numerous and important improvements consequent upon those measures. Let the price of Sugar be reduced, as it may be, to  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. give the people employment, and improve their wages by extended commerce; the productions of the West Indies may then be increased 50 per cent. like the cotton manufactures, and a similar result will follow.

The West India Planters are in general deeply involved in debt, and labour under a severe bondage to their mortgages, from which they must be emancipated by a large and liberal loan, before they can reap the manifest advantages of a change from slavery to free-labour. The rate of interest they are made to pay, including commercial advantages given to the mortgagee, must vary in almost every instance, according to the amount of the loan and other circumstances. A case is mentioned by Andrew Colville, No. 290, in which the consignment of 600 to 700 hhds of Sugar, and a considerable quantity of coffee, was unsuccessfully offered for a loan of £10,000. In

\* It may be said that one means of cheapening the cotton manufactures is the over-working of children, but we have yet no proof that it is now worse than in 1825, and indeed there has been but little evidence given of abuse in the extensive Cotton concerns in Lancashire—wherever it does exist we may hope a remedy will be applied.

this instance, if £10,000 had been lent, it has been estimated the mortgagee would have paid, in commercial advantage,  $17\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. besides the interest of 6 per cent. ; but we may presume this loan was much less than is usually granted. If £20,000 had been lent, the commercial advantages would have been  $8\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. ; or, if £25,000, 7 per cent., which, with the interest of 6 per cent., makes 13 per cent. James Colquhoun, Colonial Agent, says, (No. 987,)\* loans could not be procured at the island interest and commercial charges, amounting together from 15 to 20 per cent. James Aikin (No. 1963) calculates the planters have been paying about 20 per cent. for money borrowed.

This is not the whole disadvantage of the Planter ; for even if the bounty was not allowed in this country, he would still be obliged to send his Sugar to England, whatever advantages a sale in the West Indies, or a shipment to a continental port, might offer. He is also, in some cases, compelled to manage his estate in a way to give the mortgagee the best commission, though a different course would be for his own interest. W. R. K. Douglas says, (No. 667,) "I consider myself in the present state of the West India Colonies, that the practice of advancing so largely has been a great detriment ; in many respects the Planter is in a great measure a nominal person, who has an account in the books of the merchant ; advances are made to him, he exercises no control over the detailed management of his property, the merchant is not in a situation to take the minute direction of the person who is put into the management of the estate, and often a great deal of mismanagement arises from that circumstance. I believe the general state of the West Indies would be very much improved if those advances were entirely at an end ; and the property, instead of being in a sort of nominal possession of the merchant, with large advances, became his own property ; for in that case I believe the management would be probably more minute than it is at present."

It is a notorious fact, that a very large proportion of the West India estates are mortgaged, and that in some cases the interest and commercial advantages will be 15 or 20 per cent. on the sum lent. There is little doubt that Government could borrow money and lend it to the West Indians 10 per cent. below what they are now paying for it ; a loan £15,000,000. if lent 10 per cent. cheaper than it now costs, would be an advantage of £1,500,000. per annum. A loan of £15,000,000. might be divided amongst the Planters,

\* The numbers stated in this and other parts of this Pamphlet refer to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the State of the West Indies, ordered to be printed, 13th April, 1832.



according to the value of the Slaves in the different Colonies, being about two-fifths of their present value. If they are worth £20, on Colonial authority, in the Bahamas, the loan would be £8.; if £50. in Jamaica, the loan would be £20.; and if £80. in Demerara, the loan would be £32. This money would, of course, be lent upon the land and buildings, and on the condition of an immediate emancipation of the slaves.

It is proposed that the loan should be offered to all the Planters, whether they are in debt or not, in proportion to the number of their Slaves. The value of the Slaves will be a correct criterion of the value of the security, as their price will be in proportion to the value and fertility of the soil.

It is expected that most of the Planters would accept such loan upon the land and buildings in the Colonies, without involving the property they may have in this country. They will be thereby relieved from any unnecessary alarm about loss from emancipation, at least so far as this loan goes.

The owners of jobbing gangs, who do not possess land, might be accommodated with a grant, and a loan upon it, on condition that the land should be improved and brought into cultivation.

This loan might not extricate every Planter. Some of their properties might be so involved in debt, as to be beyond redemption; others, though not entirely freed from incumbrance, would find it so lightened, that they could make a far better bargain with a consignee: but it is hoped that by far the largest proportion would be entirely emancipated from all their trammels by the proposed loan.

There could be no risk whatever of the security, or even of the regular payment of interest, for the produce would be shipped to this country, or, in case of shipment to any other, the interest of the loan should first be paid at the colonial custom-house.

Some fears have been entertained, that if the Slaves were at liberty to choose their masters, and agree for their wages, those who had fertile soils would outbid the owners of exhausted estates; that these would be deserted, and become valueless, and the country must in such case lose its security.

Nothing is more easily obviated than this difficulty. If the loan were £20,000,000. instead of £15,000,000. the interest, if raised at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. would only be about 20s. per annum for every slave. There are few, if any, estates in the West Indies, where there are not two acres of land for every Slave; a rent of the land at 10s. per acre, would pay the interest of the loan. The rent of land occupied by the settlers in Jamaica is £2. per acre; see J. B. Wildman's evidence, Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 104, p. 450. 10s. per

acre would be ample security for the loan, and 10s. more clear to himself would be a vast improvement in the situation of the owner of an exhausted estate, deeply involved in debt. Distress would be banished from this country if every poor man had the opportunity of renting two acres of land for each one of his family at 20s. per acre. These exhausted estates are not barren rocks, or unproductive sands, but lands on which Sugar works have been erected; and which, by a proper system of cultivation, are capable of being restored again to the growth of Sugar.

If the contemplated change should prove to be as great a benefit to the West Indians, as I believe it will be, nothing could be more absurd than to give them £15,000,000. to induce them to accept a still greater benefit.

The West India Planter pays in freight and charges on his Sugar 3s. 10½d. per cwt. more than is paid from the Brazils, (*See Review of the Report of the Select Committee, page 12,*) though the insurance from the latter is higher, and the ship-owners prefer a West India voyage at the same freight. Besides this, great advantage is enjoyed by foreign Planters from not being under mortgagee restrictions. That the Brazilian planters reside on their estates, which are not mortgaged, and employ no attorneys, agents, &c. is too notorious to need any proof, or it might be fully\* shown from this evidence that they have very seldom any white men between the planter and the slave, and that white agency would be dearer.†

On an estate of 301 Negroes in Jamaica, producing 244 hhds. or 3461 cwts of Sugar,‡ there is an account of salaries and commissions, £609. sterling. Nearly the whole of this will be saved by the residence of the Planter, in comparison with a case where he is actually maintained as a non-resident; but as the estimates of the cost of cultivation, to which we have referred, do not admit of such maintenance, we will only suppose one-half to be saved, say £309 or 1s. 9d. per cwt. on 3461 cwt. of Sugar.

In the Brazils and Cuba a large proportion of the population are free,§ and on that account the wages of labour will be much lower.

\* See evidence, 2116, 2118, 2119, 2593, 2181, 2596.

† See evidence, 2597, 2598.

‡ See report, state of West Indian Colonies, ordered to be printed 24th July, 1807—page 24.

§ Extract from Admiral Fleming's evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons on the extinction of Slavery.—*See Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 104, page 380.*

The Admiral had been more in Cuba, and knew more of it than of Jamaica. *The number of free people there is very great.* The whites are about 380,000, the free coloured 136,000 to 150,000, the slaves 200,000 to 220,000; this he drew

Instead of importing lumber (see No. 2587,) at a great expense, they are enabled to make the packages of the Sugar, of wood of their own growth, and the cotton bags are of their own manufacture: for the same reason also their Sugars are clayed, whilst in our Colonies that is not done on account of the high rate of wages. Lumber for the repairs of buildings and casks on this estate costs £647, and on which the freight being at least two thirds of the price, would be saved, say 2s. 6d, per cwt. on 3461 cwt. of Sugar.

The want of free labourers enhances the price of every thing in our Colonies to a great extent. The wages of free labour in Hayti are 1s. to 1s. 3d., being only about one-half the price paid in Jamaica.

There are other means by which the emancipation of the Planters and their Slaves will lessen the cost of Sugar. In the course of this inquiry many of the witnesses speak of the exhaustion of the soil by long cultivation;\* this is a well-known, and long-admitted fact, and we therefore need not dwell on the proof; but the cause of it merits a particular investigation.

That exhaustion of soil is not the result of good cultivation, is a fact well known;—if this were the course of things, the earth would long ago have become barren and unproductive.

The population of England in 1750 was estimated at 6,467,000; from the year 1755 to 1770, the average exportation of wheat exceeded the average importations by a quantity only sufficient to supply the people, at the present estimated rate of consumption, for rather less than one week. Though the population has doubled,

from public documents; but the returns are somewhat confused. They are made up by the priests in different parishes. The free people generally are in good condition in Cuba; many of the browns and of the blacks too are very rich. He had never heard in Cuba of any complaints of a want of industry in the freed classes. A great many of them are employed in cultivating sugar in Cuba. Even some whites work in the field in Cuba who come from the Canaries, and manage all the indigo culture. He had himself seen the free people digging cane holes, and some of them work their whole estates without slaves, growing the canes and selling them to persons who boil the juice. He could not tell how many were so employed in Cuba; the number was considerable; and *when they were deficient in hands at any time in sugar plantations, they hired additional labourers*, at two pisettas, or 1s. 8d. to half a dollar a day, sometimes more, usually paid in coin, but sometimes in goods.

Thus we see it is not the importation of slaves, but the number of free labourers, which gives the Cubans the advantage. We have not found any accurate census of Brazil. In Walsh's Notices it is stated, vol. 1. p. 462, that in 1811 an incorrect census was taken of the whole country, when the inhabitants were said to amount to three millions. In Rio, about one-third of the population were slaves.

\* See No. 486, 856, 1029, 1436, 1437, 1672, 1735, 2892.



being by the last census, 13,089,538, such has been the improvement in agriculture, that we do not now, on the average, import more wheat than is needed to supply the consumption for three weeks. And if we allow for the improved habits of the people, the produce of this country must have been doubled. These improved habits are strikingly shown in the increased rate of consumption of Sugar, it being now 50 per cent. more than in 1790. But what is the cause of deterioration in the West Indies, and improvement in this country? It does not arise from any peculiarity in the cultivation of the cane. Wheat, oats, or barley, would exhaust the soils, if cultivated year after year without a change. The regular alternation of cattle and green crops, in many counties in England, whilst adding cattle to the productions of the soil, has, at the same time, greatly increased the production of grain. No improvement in this respect is yet introduced into the Colonies; instead of availing themselves of the means so evidently within their own power, the planters apply to the Legislature for relief, and have, time after time, obtained bounties and protections to bolster up their system.

Under a proper system of culture, instead of deterioration of soil, and diminution of produce, as is now the case, the lands would improve, and an increase of crops would be the consequence. Before the general adoption of the present mode of alternating with green crops and cattle, the soils in some parts of England were deteriorating, and would no doubt have been still more impoverished, if a bounty had been given to grow corn year after year, as has been done in the case of Sugar in the Colonies; but our farmers were left to themselves; in consequence of which their system is improved; they have not only produced vast numbers of cattle, but they have grown more corn than ever. There can, therefore, be no doubt that if the same plan were introduced in our Sugar Colonies, we should soon have in many of them an increase of 50 per cent. in the growth of Sugar, with little or no additional expense, and more powerful and effective labourers from the use of animal food. The absurdity of the present system, and mismanagement under it, are almost incredible. In the expenditure of the before-mentioned estate, live stock, mules, and cattle are charged £657. sterling, many of these must have been cows or oxen, and yet we find no credit given for the sale of any of them, but, on the contrary, the account is debited £149. for fresh beef.\* On these two points there is abundant room for improved management.

\* See Report of the Committee on the Trade with the West India Colonies, page 24, ordered to be printed 24th July, 1807.

The plough ought to be generally introduced ; but, as is natural, the Planters do not admit that any further improvement could be made in their practice ; it would be strange, if, when seeking help from the Legislature, they should admit they had not done all they could for themselves. It may be said that we are meddling with things we do not understand ; our reply to this is, the planters want our money to compensate for their own neglect ; and that it is strictly our business to look to that. Slavery, the source of all these evils, is the great hindrance to the use of the plough. If our farmers could not obtain extra hands in crop time, they would be obliged to keep on their own farms an additional number, whom they must employ all the year round. Now, this is precisely the situation of the planters, and therefore, a saving of labour at other times of the year is of very little importance ; but let the labourers be made free, let the plough be introduced wherever it is practicable, and they may reduce more than one-half their labourers, except in crop time. The men set at liberty from the Sugar planting, might rent lands from the proprietor, for the cultivation of cotton or coffee, or any other article of which the crop is not gathered at the same time as Sugar ; they could then assist in the Sugar crop, and their wages would assist them to pay their rents. This, amongst many others, would be the obvious advantage of emancipation, but the exact extent cannot be easily ascertained.

A loan would obviate one of the great disadvantages of the British Slave system, as compared with the Brazils and Cuba, the non-residence of the Planters ; which admits of no remedy whilst slavery exists, without sacrifices that many of the proprietors would be very unwilling to make. When the Slaves are emancipated, the estates, with the Sugar mills, might be let to tenants, who would manage them with emancipated labourers, and pay a rent as English farmers do. The mere collection of rents for non-resident Planters would be very simple, and would only cost a moderate commission upon the nett income, instead of a high rate on the gross produce.

Few, if any, concerns can be successfully managed by agents in the absence of the party interested, and least of all agricultural. Here the advantages of the presence of the Sugar Farmer, his having the unshackled management of his own concerns, and depending on that management alone for success, would be almost incalculable.

Whilst the soil has been exhausting and deteriorating in the West Indies, the productions of this country have been more than doubled. By better cultivation in the West Indies, and without



additional expense, we may very soon have an increase of sugar, 20 to 25 per cent.: and as the cost is now 15s. 8d.\* per cwt., the advantage of such an increase would be fully 3s. per cwt. By the introduction of the plough, one-half of the hands might also be dispensed with a great part of the year, which would probably reduce the cost 2s. per cwt. more.

The Slave population of our Colonies, as has been shown in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, No. 100, is decreasing at the rate of nearly 5000 per annum, when it ought to have increased at the rate of more than 15,000 per annum, making a difference of 20,000, and being a loss, at £50. each, of one million per annum. This could be easily saved by better treatment. When emancipated, the slaves will no longer be the property of the master; but it may be shown that, as landowners, their property will be more increased by an addition to the free population than if the same persons were held in slavery.

In case of emancipation, there will be 20,000 more people annually than in their present state. These must have a subsistence; and as they cannot obtain land without rent, they must either pay for it, or hire themselves to some master, who will employ them in its cultivation. In this country there is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land for every individual; and if these Colonists (being almost wholly employed in agriculture) are the means of bringing into cultivation 50,000 acres of land, at a rent of 20s. per acre, the land thus annually brought into cultivation, valued at twenty years' purchase, would be worth one million sterling. This of itself would be a benefit equal to 5s per cwt. on 200,000 tons of Sugar; but, that nothing may be overrated, I will call it 3s per cwt.

These are by no means all the savings which the emancipation of the Slaves, and of their Masters would produce, yet the amount when brought together, is most important.

Freight and Commercial changes beyond what costs to bring Sugar from the Brazils	}	3 10½
Agency .....		1 9
Lumber may be saved by free labour.....		2 6
Saving of cost by an increased quantity of 1-5th		3
By saving of labour by the introduction of the Plough .....	}	2
By an increase in the Black Population.		3
		<hr/>
		16 1½
		<hr/>

\* See Report of Select Committee on the State of the West India Colonies, ordered to be printed 23rd April, 1832, page 4.

The cost of Sugar in the Colonies is 15s. 8d. with 8s. 6d,\* for bringing to market in Great Britain, making 24s. 2d. without reckoning any thing for rent, for interest of capital, or profit. It has been stated in evidence that 10s per cwt. more would be required as a moderate remuneration for these, making together 34s 2d. Now, if this is reduced 16s 1½d per cwt., as before stated, Sugars might be produced, with a fair profit to the grower, so as to cost 18s per cwt. including freight and all charges, which with 24s per cwt. duty, would be 4½d per lb. This would be a saving to the country of 6s per cwt., even on the low prices of 1831, as stated in the Report of the Select Committee before referred to, and of fully 10s from the present price.

The proposed loan, coupled with the emancipation of the Slaves, would enable the Planters to make such savings as would afford them all the profits they sought in 1832, whilst the country would be supplied with Sugar at 10s. 6d. per cwt. cheaper than the present price. The profit to the Planters would be 10s.† per cwt. The saving in the different items recapitulated is 16s. 1½d., or more than £3,000,000 per annum ; this, added to a million, or a million and a half for naval and military expenses to keep the Slaves in subjection, will make altogether four and a half millions of clear saving, in case complete emancipation should take place. But so long as Slavery is continued in any form, this expense will fall upon some party : it has already been shewn that neither the Slaves nor the Planters are able to pay it. Hence it is evident that the country must continue to bear this immense burden until it is removed by complete emancipation, and the consequent introduction of great improvements in the cultivation of the West Indies. If this statement affords the

\* See Report of Select Committee, p. 4.

† The Report of the Select Committee states the cost of Sugar in the Colonies to be 15s 8d, the expense of bringing it to market 8s 6d, together 24s 2d ; though the Gazette price was then only 23s 8d, leaving an actual loss of 6d per cwt., (See page 4.) Since that period the Gazette price of Sugar has advanced to 28s 6d, (see Remarks on Brazils Associations Petition, page 9) being an advance of 4s 8d per cwt., so that the present price affords nearly half the advance, 10s per cwt., which it was thought would pay a moderate profit. If, with these savings, Sugar could be afforded at 18s per cwt., and include an adequate profit, it might be sold 10s 6d per cwt. below the present Gazette price. It is, however, quite clear that an increased consumption would enable the West India Planters to share with the country the benefit of such reduction. I have reduced the estimated cost of Sugar by the amount of all the savings to be made on the estate, and thus made it appear lower than it would have been, if a part of those savings had gone to the credit of the Molasses and Rum, but this course seemed best to accord with the evidence given by the West Indians to the Select Committee.

reasonable probability, that the abolition of Slavery would relieve the country from more than four millions per annum, is there one representative of the people who can hold himself excused from a full investigation of the subject? and if that investigation shall prove the general truth of the preceding statements, that man who would refuse to make the experiment, where there is scarcely a risk of loss, whilst the country has so much to gain, is wholly unworthy the character of a British Senator.

The people are naturally desirous of the removal of obnoxious taxes, but hitherto no way has been devised, except that of transferring taxation from one object to another. Let their representatives examine the means of relief here proposed; this is not transferring taxation from one thing to another, but lessening the cost of production, and cheapening the commodity to the people. In this way the revenues will be increased by an increase of consumption, whilst the price of commodities will not be increased but diminished. And as we shall soon enjoy the advantages of opening of the trade with China, we shall then have the manifest advantages of free trade in two great commodities—*Sugar* and *Tea*, each of them affording a large increase to the revenue, at the same time that the price of each is reduced to the consumer.

Before we had a House of Commons representing the people, hidden means were resorted to, like the Sugar bounties, for conferring advantages on particular interests; but may we not now hope that every measure will be fairly open to the light? That whatever relief is afforded to the West Indians will be done without disguise? We shall then have no cause to doubt, if the effect is fully explained to the people, that they will prefer the open plan of a loan, which will benefit the West Indians four times the amount of what it will cost the country, even if the money was absolutely given, to making unknown sacrifices in bounties, monopolies, &c. four times the amount of the benefit conferred. I hope the country will support a loan to the West Indians, by which I believe there is no danger of any loss whatever; and, further, that they will cordially sanction its being for so liberal an amount, as will enable the West Indians to profit by the change, and to participate in, the general rejoicings of the country on the accomplishment of this highly advantageous and glorious object.







[Printed for the West India Body.]

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# REPORT

OF

THE ACTING COMMITTEE

TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE

OF

WEST INDIA PLANTERS AND  
MERCHANTS,

13th January, 1847.

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LONDON:

MAURICE & CO., HOWFORD BUILDINGS, FENCHURCH STREET.

1847.

## Acting Committee.

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## R E P O R T.

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SHORTLY after the meeting of the Standing Committee in July last, Parliament determined, by a large majority, to repeal the Corn-laws. Although the discriminating duties on sugar were, in their origin and design, very different from the restrictions upon the importation of corn,—yet, having some analogy, and having long been the object of assiduous misrepresentation, they were so associated in the public mind, that, as soon as the greater question was settled, it became evident that these duties would undergo early revision. It was in anticipation of this event that the Acting Committee, in their Report to the half-yearly meeting in March last, expressed their conviction that the Colonies would not be unwilling to encounter extended competition, if even partially prepared for so formidable a conflict by the *immediate* concession of those measures which they had a right to claim as preliminary to any further change of policy towards them. No concession, however, was made to prepare for such a change.

The differential duties on sugar were not granted



or maintained as a boon to the Colonies, but merely to countervail the restrictions imposed upon them by the Imperial Parliament for the benefit of various interests in the mother-country. They have never been adequate to that purpose,—they have never afforded an equivalent for these restrictions,—and consequently the Colonies have not derived any *favour* whatever from them. These duties have, nevertheless, been valuable latterly in defending the Colonies from unequal competition with those countries which since the peace have carried on an immense traffic in slaves, and, thereby acquiring abundant and cheap labour, have proportionably enlarged their cultivation. Because they have thus most justly afforded some degree of protection to the Colonies, they have been ignorantly or inconsiderately regarded as conferring an undue privilege. So general, indeed, has been the practice, even among intelligent men, when discussing questions affecting the Colonies, to bring into prominence the advantages they have recently enjoyed, and to omit all consideration of the burdens and disabilities they have long endured, that the most erroneous popular belief has been formed. By the great majority it is never doubted that they have always existed upon the bounteous liberality of the mother-country, and that she has been unhappily persuaded to maintain an exclusive system for their support. The mother-country has, on many occasions when calamitous visitations have afflicted the Colonies, generously

and promptly extended her aid for their immediate relief. But she has never failed to consult her own special interests, and to prefer them to theirs, in regulating their trade. Formerly, no attempt was made to conceal this fact. On the contrary, it was openly avowed, for nothing can be more frank than the declaration in the Act upon which the Colonial system was founded,—the 12 Car. II., cap. 18,—wherein the motive for the enactment is statèd to be the sole benefit of our own navigation and people. And even if this distinct intimation had not been given, there could not have been any difficulty in discovering its intent, for it was certainly not calculated to be beneficial to the people of the Colonies.

If, instead of adopting this compound system of prohibitions and distinctions,—which was altogether her own work, for they had no part in its construction,—she had accorded to them at an early period the freedom of trade which has recently become the national policy, there can be little doubt that they would now be in a state of comparative prosperity and independence. This view is confirmed, though on different grounds, by the most ardent opponents of the Colonial system, who, while alleging that, notwithstanding its peculiar design, it has been injurious to the mother-country, also insist that it has been still more prejudicial to the Colonies. They have, therefore, had no reason to prefer the restric-

tive, or, as it is more frequently called, the protective system. It is true they have generally been adverse to great changes. All parties whose interests are connected with fixed capital naturally entertain the same reluctance. But their opposition has in every case arisen chiefly from an apprehension of partial legislation, which has, moreover, been invariably justified by the event. This partial legislation is strikingly exemplified in the act for abrogating all difference of duty on sugar, whether British or foreign, the produce of free or slave labour.

In abandoning a system which was originally devised for the sole benefit of our own navigation and people, and which had, with little practical variation, been maintained for that purpose for two centuries, it might have been expected that a comprehensive view would be taken of all its parts,—restrictions as well as supposed equivalents,—and that they would be simultaneously abolished. This would have presented an appearance of equity which would have commanded a very general assent, though justice, or at least a liberal consideration of the actual state of the Colonies, might have required that the abolition of restrictions should rather precede than accompany the abatement of privileges. For nearly forty years, and especially during the last twenty, the Colonies have been subjected to a series of measures, both in respect to their social

condition and their relations with the mother-country, which have progressively diminished the amount, and enhanced the cost, of effective labour in the face of increasing competition. Even regarding these measures as the necessary though painful remedies for the cure of a great evil, and assuming that they have been applied in the most judicious manner,—though that is a point which might well be questioned,—it cannot be denied that during this transition the proprietors of the Colonies have suffered, and that they are now suffering, most severely. While they have been contending with all the difficulties incident to these changes, and have been advancing,—through ameliorating laws, short-time bills, and apprenticeship,—to absolute freedom, and the condition of their labouring population has been rendered equal to that of any peasantry in existence, their competitors have maintained their cheaper production by an immense slave-trade, and the most rigorous slavery.

It could hardly have been deemed a great stretch of liberality if, under these circumstances, the mother-country, in declaring her intention to adopt a different system, had determined, as the *first* step in her new career, to unfetter the Colonies, to abrogate every restriction affecting the growth or sale of their products, to give full scope to their capabilities, and to serve them with such ample notice to quit all dependence upon differential duties as would



enable them to take full advantage of this improved position. Nor could it have appeared any mark of undue favour if, extending to her offspring the natural affection of a parent, she had made an exception on their behalf as against all slave produce, and granted to them permanently such a moderate preference as is commonly conceded to a regular and approved customer.

Accordingly, when Her Majesty's present advisers came into power, and evinced a disposition to propose a settlement of the sugar duties, the Committee did fully expect that this course would be pursued. It soon appeared, however, that their confidence was misplaced. The measure brought forward practically repealed the differential duties on sugar of every description in three years, and, with the exception of a slight reduction of the duty on rum, left the disabilities on the Colonies untouched. Upon making this discovery, the Committee immediately transmitted the following Memorial to Her Majesty's Government :—

“The Committee of West India Planters and Merchants have learnt with great concern, that it is the intention of her Majesty's Government to propose the admission of all foreign sugar, whether the produce of free or slave labour, at the same rate of duty ; and to abrogate, within a definite period, all differential duty between such fo-



reign sugar and the produce of the British Plantations.

“The Committee respectfully submit, that such a measure would be highly inconsistent with the policy which has been pursued towards the West India Colonies, as well as the pledges which it implies,—and that it would afford the most direct encouragement to the continuance of slavery, and the extension of the slave-trade in various foreign States.

“Under a system of compulsory, though regulated, labour, the West India Colonies had always been able to furnish the mother-country with a superabundant supply of sugar, until, from a general aversion to the institution of slavery, which she had originated and maintained, it was deemed right to abolish it at an enormous sacrifice ; so great indeed, that though nearly seventeen millions were paid towards compensation, it was manifest, from the reports of the Commissioners appointed by the Crown to award that sum for the property which was then placed in jeopardy, that it fell short of one-seventh part of its value.

“It must have been evident that so great a change in the condition of the people would occasion as great a change in the relations of society, and especially that there would be a serious interruption of rural industry.

“Under these circumstances it might have been expected that the Legislature and the Executive

Government would afford every possible assistance to mitigate the inconvenience and loss which were inseparable from this sudden transition, to preserve the Colonies as beneficial possessions, and to exhibit to other nations the example of a successful experiment worthy of imitation.

“ A policy directly the reverse of this course was unhappily adopted. Although it was quite certain that a great proportion of the agricultural labourers would, on being liberated from their obligations of service, occupy themselves with other pursuits, the proprietors were, by a strange exercise of power, which they have always regarded as unjustifiable, on the part of the Executive Government, prohibited from employing any other servants than those who chose to remain on the estates.

“ While immigration into the Colonies was thus prevented, the fiscal restrictions which have so long tended to depress them were rigidly maintained, and all the products of India,—happily placed in more favourable circumstances, possessing abundant and cheap labour,—were admitted to consumption at equal rates of duty with those of the West Indies.

“ The restrictions upon immigration, after being obstinately maintained for many years to the grievous loss of the proprietors, have at length, though very recently, been relaxed. But they are still prohibited from attempting to hire, even within the British dominions, the labourers most suitable for

their service,—they continue to be restricted in procuring the articles of most general consumption, and in the sale of their staple products.

“ Even if all these restrictions were immediately and totally removed, the Colonies could not for a long time—for many years—be in the same position as if they never had existed. And they were imposed and have been upheld by the power, and for the exclusive benefit of the mother-country, against the wishes and contrary to the interests of the Colonists.

“ The differential duty which has long appeared on the Tariff in favour of their sugar was altogether inoperative while they produced a greater quantity than the mother-country consumed. For although during that period they occasionally derived an indirect advantage in the drawback of duty on refined sugar exported, in consequence of progressive improvement in the process of refinement, yet it was inconsiderable in amount, and it was never designedly given, or allowed to continue after it was discovered to exist. At that period the Colonies were compelled to bring all their production in the first instance to the mother-country, and consequently to incur double freights and charges, and loss of weight and interest, upon all that portion which was afterwards of necessity exported; so that, while they have laboured under the disabilities imposed upon them by the mother-country for the purpose of se-

curing to herself a monopoly of their trade, they have not enjoyed any equivalent advantage.

“ When the mother-country, by her legislative measures, reduced the production of the Colonies to nearly one-half of its former amount, and thereby enhanced the price to the consumer by destroying the surplus which had previously controlled it, the differential duty for the first time came into practical operation. If, since that period, the people of this country have paid more for sugar than they would have paid had the produce of slaves not been excluded, this sacrifice is a consequence of their earnest opposition to slavery and the slave-trade ; for which objects they have also imposed a still greater sacrifice upon their fellow-subjects in the Colonies.

“ If the mind of the nation has undergone, as is implied by the measure in contemplation, so complete a change as now to call for the abandonment of the principle for which all this sacrifice has been required, the Committee trust that, as the Colonies are wholly unrepresented in Parliament, Her Majesty’s Government will protect them from being again made the victims of inconsiderate legislation.

“ Assuming that it shall be determined, however inconsistently, to give the most direct encouragement to the continuance and extension of the slave-trade which that traffic can receive, by admitting slave-grown sugar on the same terms as foreign



sugar the produce of free labour, and to fix a time when all sugar shall, without distinction, be admitted at the same rate of duty; it will be manifestly unjust thus to expose the West India Colonies to competition with all the world, until they have been afforded full opportunity of preparing to encounter so formidable a contest.

“ The mother-country having first destroyed their means of producing sugar on the same terms with other countries, has prevented them from endeavouring to redress the wrong which she inflicted. The partial relaxation of restrictions recently made, are only partial concessions of natural rights which ought never to have been denied. Every remaining fetter by which the Colonies have been disabled must be removed, and ample time allowed for them to recover from the effects of the thralldom under which they have been held, before they can be brought into a vigorous condition.

“ The main purpose of admitting sugar, the produce of all countries, upon equal terms, must be to obtain a more abundant supply at a lower price. That object cannot be accomplished so speedily and certainly, irrespective of all questions of moral principle, by any other means as by affording a just consideration to the circumstances and claims of the West India Colonies. At present, even in their state of depression, they contribute a fifth part of the whole supply of sugar to Europe, and nearly three-fifths of the supply to this country. It is ob-



vious that unless they are enabled to continue this contribution, any deficiency must be made up by a greater contribution from some other source. But, inasmuch as the whole quantity of sugar annually produced throughout the world is now annually consumed, no additional supply can be drawn to this country without enhancing the price in the general market of Europe,—or until a greater production shall take place in some other tropical country.

“ The extension of cultivation, however, requires every where the same combination of capital and labour, and the same lapse of time. Until the sugar of India was admitted to the home market, and consequently to the benefit of the differential duty, which has since then been an effectual privilege, the quantity sent to Europe was very inconsiderable, while at the same time the slave countries largely increased their supplies to the markets which were open to all. It may therefore be doubted whether, in the event supposed to occur, the extension would take place in India. It is much more, indeed highly, probable that it would take place in the slave countries. In either case the lapse of a long period would be necessary. This opinion will at once be confirmed in regard to India by reference to the actual imports from that country under all the advantages now enjoyed. On reviewing the returns for the last five years, it will be seen that, with various fluctuations during that period, the quantity imported in 1845 does not exceed that of 1841 by

more than 3,500 tons. If, then, the augmentation of supply shall come from the slave countries, it can only be procured after a great extension of the slave-trade has been successfully effected; new works and machinery erected; new districts brought into cultivation; and a large investment of capital made.

“On the other hand, the West India Colonies possess the necessary works and machinery, and cleared land, and means of transport for a much larger production than they can at present accomplish. To render their cultivation again profitable, and to induce its extension, they only require the enjoyment of freedom in procuring labour; in importing supplies; and in disposing of their products. That they cannot, in their actual circumstances, maintain greater competition is manifest, for though they obtain a higher price for their sugar than foreign tropical countries, their property, with the exception of a few favoured spots, can neither be let nor sold. If the price of sugar were materially reduced by competition, a large part of the whole cultivation would of necessity be abandoned, and a great deficit would ensue.

“The Committee have always considered that the Act for the abolition of slavery in the West India Colonies implied a guarantee to them against competition with the produce of slave labour, and they conceive that they are entitled on that ground to permanent protection as respects all those countries where slavery exists. But they respectfully submit

that, apart from this consideration, there would be no advantage whatever to the people of the mother-country in denying to the West India Colonies the ample time and opportunity which they justly claim, to prepare for the universal competition with which they are threatened.

(signed) CHARLES CAVE,  
*Chairman."*

"WEST INDIA COMMITTEE ROOMS,  
15th July, 1846."

This representation did not command any attention, having been merely acknowledged in the usual laconic terms. Afterwards, some of the ministers affected to treat with contempt the argument, that the slave-trade may be encouraged by the encouragement of slave produce. The Earl of Clarendon, whose authority on this subject is justly regarded, was particularly strenuous in his denial of such an effect. The Committee sincerely hope that his lordship's opinion will prove well-founded, and their own apprehensions illusory; but, if the slave-trade should, on the contrary, revive and extend,—for the low price of sugar has latterly kept it in check,—it is surely not too much to presume that, as it will then become evident that we are its greatest abettors, so will our aversion to it revive, and the exclusion of the sugar of slave-trading countries be again adopted as one of the best means of discouraging that traffic. Such a policy would prove the more effectual after they had for a time enjoyed the advantage of admis-

sion. At all events, there can be no doubt that it is clearly the duty of the people and Government of this country to persevere in using every practicable means to suppress it.

Petitions, of the same purport as the Memorial, which were subsequently presented to both Houses of Parliament, were equally ineffectual. The protracted debates upon the Corn-laws had so exhausted all parties, and the relative position of the three great sections of the House of Commons had become so peculiar, that the Ministers were placed practically in the possession of absolute power, which only required to be used with plausible discretion. That being, however, a state of affairs which seldom endures very long, some great popular measure was desirable to consolidate the new Government before the close of the session.\* Time was accordingly found to carry the repeal of the differential duties on sugar, which the public had been taught to believe conferred an unmerited protection upon the Colonies. To those who have not had occasion to consider the subject in all its bearings, this prompt movement may have appeared to afford unquestionable evidence of a vigorous and impartial administration. Such a conclusion would, however, be very erroneous. Her Majesty's Ministers in

\* The members did not even take the trouble to attend the debates. The greatest *division* on the Sugar-Duties Bill could not command the presence of more than 159, leaving 500 absentees.



this case furnished another instance of the partial legislation of which the Colonies have so frequently complained. They found it inconvenient to grapple with the correlative questions, in some of which, covering monopolies, powerful home interests are concerned. Their professions in favour of the principles of free-trade have not yet carried them beyond an introductory Act. In order to apply these principles to the West India Colonies, something more is required than the equalization of the duties on sugar. However important these duties may be considered, they constitute but a part of the question between them and the mother-country. The 'settlement' which she has thus proposed recognises only one side of the account, claiming all that appears at her credit, but forgetting to take into consideration the amount at her debit. To effect a just settlement, upon the adoption of the new policy, it would have been necessary, not merely to look at the whole case in its present aspect, but to review their past transactions, and, having ascertained the large balance due to the Colonies, to grant them equivalent immunities.

For the purpose of demonstrating the extent of this obligation on the part of the mother-country, it might perhaps be useful now to trace and explain the true character of their relations in times past. But such an inquiry would necessarily present a tedious history of fiscal oppression, which, it is feared, would not possess any general interest, or



lead to any beneficial result. Without adverting to the disastrous consequences of the great experiment made upon Colonial property by the Imperial Parliament, a few examples may be given of the legislation under which the Colonies have, by a strange perversion of language, been accused of enjoying a monopoly.

Previous to the separation of the United States from the mother-country, the intercourse between them and the West Indies, as sister Colonies, was free. No countries are more fitted, by their respective circumstances and their relative position, to maintain an <sup>ten.</sup> exclusive and regular exchange of commodities. The West Indians had long received from the Colonies, which afterwards became the United States, many of their most necessary supplies, and paid for them in the most convenient manner by the produce of their plantations. This trade, which had been so considerable as to employ 115,000 tons of shipping, was, of course, equally desirable *for the West India Colonies* after the independence of the United States; but that event deprived them of the right to hold any intercourse. It was, indeed, so necessary, that the mother-country was induced to relax partially her restrictions, and to pass an Act in 1785, "to regulate the Trade be-

28 Geo. III.  
cap. 6.

tween them and the United States, and the Foreign Islands in the West Indies." The extent of her liberality will be seen by a brief synopsis of the Act. It first declares, that "the trade has, by experience,

been found to be beneficial to the Colonies ;” and it then proceeds to enact,—

1. That only certain articles shall be imported, namely, tobacco, pitch, tar, turpentine, hemp, flax, masts, yards, bowsprits, staves, heading boards, timber, shingles, and lumber of any sort ; horses, neat cattle, sheep, hogs, poultry, and live stock of any sort ; bread, biscuit, flour, peas, beans, potatoes, wheat, rice, oats, barley, and grain of any sort ; such being the growth or production of the United States.

2. That the articles shall be imported only by British subjects and in British ships.

3. That none of these articles shall be admissible from any foreign island in the West Indies.

4. That no article whatsoever shall be exported from any of the West India Colonies, except by British subjects and in British ships.

5. That in case of public emergency or distress, the Governor of any one of them may, for a limited time, authorize the importation of the enumerated articles from any foreign island in the West Indies ; but, even in that case, only by British subjects and in British ships.

It is needless to comment upon such ‘regulation.’ The United States could not be expected to tolerate a trade in which all participation was denied to them. As a matter of course, they retaliated—imposed discriminating duties—which again induced retri-

sals; and a long and keen contest ensued—by Acts of Parliament and Congress, Orders in Council, and negotiations,—on our part for exclusion, and on theirs for admission. Occasionally, when our restrictions reduced the Colonies to great distress for the most essential supplies, the Governors ‘felt themselves under the necessity of opening their ports,’ and on this ground were indemnified by Parliament. After a limited interval they were again closed, and so continued until the pressure of their destitution caused another crisis, when this proceeding was repeated. For a short time the respective ‘regulations’ of the ‘high contending parties’ drove the trade to the foreign free ports, where they met, the one to land his wares, and the other to re-ship them, incurring of course double freights and charges. At another period, for several years—1818 to 1820—it was carried on through the ports of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in like manner, at a great additional expense. Thus the mother-country, without the least regard to the interests or wishes of the West India Colonies, persisted for half a century, in quest of advantages to herself, to subject them, not merely to inconvenience, but to incalculable loss, by depriving them of a natural trade, which her own Acts of Parliament admit they had found to be both beneficial and necessary.

<sup>46</sup> Geo. III.  
cap. 53.

<sup>58</sup> Geo. III.  
cap. 7.

<sup>58</sup> Geo. III.  
cap. 19.

In regard to other foreign states, the prohibition to hold intercourse with them remained in force—

with the exception of an unpractical modification in 1822—until 1825. In that year, when the Customs and Navigation Laws were remodelled, it was partially repealed; and by the 6 Geo. IV., cap. 114, this conditional surrender of restriction was defined in the following terms :— \*

“ § IV. ‘ And whereas by the law of navigation, ‘ foreign ships are permitted to import into any of the ‘ *British* possessions abroad, from the countries to ‘ which they belong, goods the produce of those ‘ countries, and to export goods from such possessions ‘ to be carried to any foreign country whatever ; and ‘ whereas it is expedient that such permission should ‘ be subject to certain conditions :’ be it therefore enacted, that the privileges thereby granted to

6 Geo. IV.      \* Some of the differential duties imposed by the very same  
cap. 114.      Act which authorized these Orders in Council to be issued, are  
as follows :—

Flour, per barrel of 196 lbs.	5s.,
or about 20 per cent. ad valorem.	
Rice . . . . .	7½      ”      ”
Staves for casks, per thousand . . . . .	15s.
Shingles for roofing, per thousand . . . . .	7s. to 14s.
Boards, one inch thick, per 1000 feet . . . . .	21s.
Other wood, per 1000 feet . . . . .	28s.
Wood hoops, per thousand . . . . .	5s. 3d.
Horses, mules, neat cattle, and all other live stock . . . . .	10 per cent. ad valorem.
Cotton, woollen, and silk manu- factures . . . . .	15      ”      ”
Soap . . . . .	20      ”      ”
Linen, leather, and glass manu- factures . . . . .	30      ”      ”



foreign ships shall be limited to the ships of those countries which, having colonial possessions, shall grant the like privileges of trading with those possessions to *British* ships, or which, not having colonial possessions, shall place the commerce and navigation of this country, and of its possessions abroad, upon the footing of the most favoured nation, unless His Majesty, by his Order in Council, shall, in any case, deem it expedient to grant the whole or any of such privileges to the ships of any foreign country, although the conditions aforesaid shall not, in all respects, be fulfilled by such foreign country."

During the ten years of peace which preceded the passing of this Act, upwards of half a million of <sup>6 Geo. IV. cap. 114.</sup> slaves had been introduced into Brazil and the Spanish islands. The consequence of this immense influx of labour was so great an abundance and cheapness of foreign sugar, that, before the close of that period, it fell below the price at which sugar could be raised in our own Colonies. It was then quite safe for the mother-country to make the relaxation, because these circumstances rendered it unnecessary to compel the Colonies to bring their produce to her; and the permission to trade with foreigners, which had been so long withheld, and which would previously have been of the utmost importance to the Colonies, was therefore of no value whatever. She retained the restriction as long as it was advantageous to herself, without any regard to their interests.



In virtue of the Act above cited, various Orders in Council have been issued as follows :—

On the 3rd May, 1826—permitting Prussian ships to import the produce of Prussia.

On the 1st June and 16th December—permitting French ships to import certain enumerated articles, but expressly excluding wines.

On the 16th July, 1827—permitting the ships of Russia, Sweden, Norway, Hanover, Hamburg, Bremen, Lubec, Oldenburg, Mexico, Columbia, Rio de la Plata, to import the produce of their respective countries.

On the 28th April, 1828—permitting Spanish ships to import from colonies and possessions abroad, the produce of such colonies and possessions.

On the 7th April, 1830—permitting Austrian ships to import the produce of Austria.

On the 5th November, 1830—repealing all the prohibitory orders touching American ships, and permitting them to import the produce of the United States.

On the 1st April, 1835—permitting Danish ships to import the produce of Denmark.

On the 2nd November, 1842—permitting Portuguese ships to import the produce of Portugal.

On the 23rd August, 1843—permitting Haytian ships to import the produce of Hayti.

This enumeration is given to exhibit both the grudging reluctance with which the several conces-

sions have been made, and the extent of prohibition which remains; but the relaxations thus formally announced by so many Orders in Council are, notwithstanding all this parade, merely apparent—for of what practical use could it be to allow certain foreign ships to bring certain foreign commodities, if, when they came, they were to be met by the differential duties imposed by the Imperial Parliament for the express purpose of excluding them, and securing a monopoly to the produce and manufactures of the mother-country.

Another important part of the restrictive system was surrendered so recently as in 1845, when the prohibition to bring Colonial sugar to this country in a purified or refined state was repealed. This act of justice was not conceded, however, until the Colonies were in a state of extreme depression—still fettered—threatened with further changes—and when confidence was so impaired as to discourage the investment of capital, which, under more favourable circumstances, would have been liberally provided for the improvements in the manufacture of their produce which the prohibition had prevented.

No person having any acquaintance with the respective wants and products of the West India Colonies and the United States, can doubt that if, *as the interests of the Colonies required*, their trade had not been interrupted, and, when partially permitted, grievously taxed by the legislation of the

mother-country for her own exclusive benefit, it would have been very considerable and advantageous. Nor is it less certain that, apart from other restrictions, the compulsory importation of their produce, and the prohibition to bring it in the best condition, have had a most pernicious influence upon the agriculture and trade of the Colonies—ininitely greater than could be compensated by any advantage which they have latterly derived from the difference of the duties on sugar.

It was vain, however, to expect that while the people, and even the Parliament, of the mother-country were under the delusion that they had been submitting to sacrifices for the benefit of the Colonies, they would be induced to give any consideration to this long course of injustice. Yet the Committee felt that they were the more entitled to insist upon the immediate redress of the remaining grievances from which they now actually suffer. The petitions of the West India Body presented to Parliament, concluded with the following prayer :—

“That no measure for the settlement of the sugar duties may be passed by your Honourable House which shall not afford the West India Colonies ample time and opportunity to procure additional labour, with adequate protection in the mean while, and which shall not also ensure to them the admission of their rum into consumption on equal terms

with home-made spirits throughout the United Kingdom, the free use of sugar and molasses for every purpose, the repeal of all restrictions on their trade, and every advantage which they can justly claim in accordance with the principles of free commerce."

And in various interviews which the Committee have had with Her Majesty's Ministers, every endeavour has been made to impress them with the justice of conceding these claims—

1. By permitting and encouraging immigration of suitable labourers into the Colonies.

2. By equalizing the duties on home-made spirits and rum throughout the United Kingdom.

3. By admitting sugar and molasses to free use in the breweries and distilleries, at duties equivalent in effect to the malt-tax.

4. By repealing the Act 5 & 6 Vict., cap. 49, for regulating the trade of the British possessions abroad, whereby a monopoly of that trade is secured to the produce and manufactures of the mother-country.

5. By giving the Colonies perfect freedom of intercourse, at equal duties, with all countries in amity with Her Majesty.

[ The Committee also expressed an earnest desire that application might be made to Parliament for authority to guarantee moderate loans to defray the necessary expense of immigration, upon the same



conditions in regard to interest and re-payment as those which were adopted in granting the loan of a million and a half some years ago to Canada, after the pacification of that province. And they contemplated the possibility of obtaining for the improvement of their agriculture some encouragement analogous to that which has recently been given in this country under various drainage and other Acts. But they found so little disposition to entertain any generous feeling towards the Colonies, that they deferred this expectation till a more convenient season. Although all the propositions above enumerated are simple and intelligible, and in the new circumstances in which the Colonies are placed obviously undeniable, yet they were resisted upon the plea that they involved important questions of revenue, and that changes so extensive could not be made, at all events, before the close of the session. This plea was, of course, equally applicable to the duties on sugar. It has, indeed, been inferred by some, from the great increase which has lately taken place in the consumption, that if these duties had not been altered the supply would have been inadequate, because the quantity received from the British possessions does not much exceed the quantity consumed. But it must be remembered, that the importations from the Eastern countries were checked by the prospect of additional competition. Vague allegations about the revenue are ever ready when delay is desired, and Ministers generally take refuge



under some suggested report from a subordinate department,—the Excise, in particular, being sure to get up any required amount of incomprehensible difficulty to mystify Parliament.

To manifest some appearance of concession, the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a reduction of sixpence per gallon of the duty on rum, and promised to give due consideration during the recess to the representations of the Committee respecting the spirit duties and the use of sugar and molasses. An Act was also passed empowering the local Governments of the Colonies, with the consent of Her Majesty of course, to reduce or repeal the imperial differential duties. As these duties were imposed by Parliament to prevent the Colonies from importing foreign produce and manufactures upon the same terms as British produce and manufactures, so they ought, at once and unconditionally, to have been repealed by the same authority, with a notice of four or six months. The unusual course adopted not only occasions unnecessary delay, but also transfers to the Executive Government the power of refusing as well as of confirming the acts of the Colonial legislatures. This deviation was vindicated on the ground that these duties produce revenue to the Colonies, and that it might be inconvenient to repeal them entirely. But this is altogether fallacious. The legislature of each Colony enacts such a revenue tariff as may be suitable to its circumstances, which must of course receive the

royal assent. The duties thus levied are equally applicable to imports from all countries. But the Imperial Parliament has also imposed other duties which must be paid in addition to the Colonial duties *upon all foreign produce and manufactures*. The effect of these additional or differential duties has been, as they were intended, to exclude the greater part of the commodities to which they apply. Certain articles of primary necessity, however, force their way through this obstruction, especially since the modification of the imperial tariff a few years ago. The produce of the differential duties which these yield, is first applied to pay the salaries of the officers of customs, and the balance is paid into the treasury of the Colony. This is a peculiar method of raising revenue,—to exclude many articles of general consumption, and to exact heavy differential duties upon a few others which are imported notwithstanding every discouragement. It is hardly necessary to observe that, if the interests of the West India Colonies had been consulted, these distinctions would never have existed, and that their ports would have been open to supplies from every country on equal terms.

Upon the important subject of labour, the Committee are disposed to believe that the Colonies may confidently anticipate from the present Secretary of State for the Colonial department all that intelligent and honest zeal for their welfare can effect. Although the correspondence which will be found in

the Appendix does not indicate perfect agreement between the views of Earl Grey and the Committee, yet they have reason to expect that his lordship will at length sanction the direct intercourse between certain parts of Africa and the West Indies, for which they have so long contended; and that, in order to give free emigration the countenance and support of the Government, one of her Majesty's steamer transports will be immediately employed as a regular emigrant packet. This arrangement must tend to create confidence among the people on the coast of Africa, where distrust so naturally prevails, and is by interested parties so easily fostered; and it is hoped, that gradually they may be induced to emigrate in such numbers as will furnish a very valuable addition to the labouring population of the Colonies.\*

Immediately after the close of the session, the Committee prepared and transmitted to Her Majesty's Government the following statement respecting the spirit duties:—

“ MEMORANDUM relative to the Duties on Rum  
and Home-made Spirits.

“ 1. According to the returns laid before Parliament the quantities of rum imported, retained for

\* No unnecessary delay need be apprehended in carrying this decision, when made, into practical operation,—for the Emigration Board, as now constituted, affords every promise of prompt and efficient administration.

home consumption, and exported, during the last six years were as follows :—

	Imported Gallons.	Retained for Home Consumption.	Exported Gallons.
In 1840,	5,477,669	2,830,612	1,155,753
1841,	4,310,101	2,510,668	1,326,410
1842,	4,065,546	2,278,081	1,099,396
1843,	4,635,605	2,097,866	723,423
1844,	3,120,010	2,198,870	741,211
1845,	4,807,512	2,469,549	778,954
	<hr/> 26,416,443 <hr/>	<hr/> 14,385,646 <hr/>	<hr/> 5,825,147 <hr/>

2. “ By the return No. 361, 29th May, 1846, it appears that the quantity of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom during the year 1845 was—

	Gallons.
From a mixture of malt with un-	
malted grain . . . . .	16,901,369
From malt only . . . . .	6,781,346
	<hr/>
Making a total of . . . . .	23,682,715
	<hr/>

Of this quantity there were distilled in—

England . . . . .	5,866,593
Scotland . . . . .	9,418,663
Ireland . . . . .	8,397,459
	<hr/>
	17,816,122
	<hr/>
	23,682,715
	<hr/>

“3. By the same return it appears that the number of gallons of spirits charged with duty for consumption, during the year 1845 was—

In England,	9,076,381	at 7s. 10d.
Scotland,	6,441,011	at 3s. 8d.
Ireland,	7,605,196	at 2s. 8d.

Total consumption	<u>23,122,588</u>
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“4. Although the quantity of malt used in making spirits from mixed grain is not exhibited by any official return, yet it is believed that the proportion is such as will, on an average of the whole, incur a charge for malt duty to the amount of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per gallon.

“5. In the case of spirits made wholly from malt, in Scotland and Ireland, a drawback of 1s. 2d. per gallon was formerly allowed. That rate appears, after some experience, to have been deemed excessive ; for a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1831 to investigate the subject, and they reported against its continuance. An Act was accordingly passed in the following session of Parliament—1832—reducing the drawback to 8d. per gallon.

“6. The duty on the malt used by distillers in England is payable at such periods as may be fixed, from time to time, by the Commissioners of Excise. In Scotland and Ireland the law seems to require payment within six days ; but it also contemplates



arrears, which implies a longer actual credit. In the Parliamentary paper, No. 449, 29th June, 1846, relating to 'Burdens on Land' it is stated, at page 30, that the maltsters are allowed a credit of six months.

"7. The mode of ascertaining the quantity of spirits for duty, is uniform throughout the United Kingdom, viz. :

First. By per centage from the wash.

Second. By the produce as found in the low wines.

Third. By the produce on re-distillation of the low wines into spirits.

The last being that which practically determines the quantity charged.

"8. In England spirits are not bonded, but, as the distillers regulate their production by the actual demand, they deliver and receive payment immediately. There cannot, therefore, be any loss by leakage or interest on duty. On the contrary, it is alleged that they generally obtain an available settlement for the spirits, including the duty, before they are required to settle with the Excise. This statement is confirmed by the return before mentioned, No. 361, 29th May, 1846, by which it appears, at page 4, that, while the number of gallons permitted out from distillers' stocks, during the year ending on the 5th January, 1846, was 5,775,803, the stocks remaining in the hands of distillers on

that day were only 96,924 gallons ; being less than one week's production.

“ 9. In Scotland and Ireland the practice is different. Spirits are bonded, and may be removed in bond from one place to another. The duty is charged upon the quantity as put into bond, and consequently upon any leakage which may take place. What loss may be incurred on this account cannot be ascertained without official returns ; but it is understood to be exceedingly small, as spirits are generally in bond for a very short period.

“ 10. The high differential duties against rum have induced the manufacture of an imitation rum, which, being sold cheaper, has displaced West India rum to a great extent ; it is estimated at 6,000 puncheons in England.

“ 11. Rum is also extensively superseded by a mixture of home-made spirits and rum, which is permitted to be effected in the bonded warehouse, in virtue of the Excise Board's order, dated in December 1838. This mixture is sold in bond, for exportation or for ships' stores, as rum.

“ 12. Rum is subject to great disadvantage after being taken into the licensed dealers' stock. He is not allowed to reduce it to a lower strength than 17 per cent. under proof ; while, on the other hand, British rum, or a compound of corn spirits with about one-sixth of West India rum, is admitted into the retailers' stock under what is called a compound permit ; and he may sweeten it as he pleases, and

vend it at whatever strength may best suit his purpose. Thus he prefers the compound to the real rum, because he is enabled to gain largely by reducing the strength, for which he provides by various stimulating ingredients a cheap substitute.

“13. The expense of rectifying, which may be estimated at 6d. per gallon, cannot be regarded as a charge imposed by Parliament. Spirits are rectified for the purpose of producing a more valuable article, and the expense of the process must be included in the cost of the manufacture, and cannot form any ground for claiming a differential duty.

“14. Nor can any regulations prescribed by the Commissioners of Excise for ascertaining and collecting the revenue be admitted as constituting a tax. These are deemed absolutely necessary for the prevention of fraud, and recent occurrences, which have become public in the case of the *Queen versus George Smith*, prove that they are by no means too stringent. It is evident, from the occasional discovery of such a case as this, that, even under the most strict regulations of excise, there is great possibility of large quantities of home-made spirits entering into consumption without any payment of duty.

“Rum is, in like manner, subjected to regulation. It must be imported exclusively in British ships of a certain tonnage, in packages of a certain size, and bonded in warehouses of special security.

“15. There does not appear to be any ground for

supposing that, if the duties on home-made spirits and rum were equalized throughout the United Kingdom, there would be any greater risk of the revenue suffering by the smuggling of rum from Ireland or Scotland into England than it now incurs from the possibility of smuggling Scotch and Irish spirits. It is quite as anomalous to have three rates of excise duty, as to have three rates of customs' duty. But this double anomaly already exists,—for, by the 8th & 9th Vict., cap. 65, three several rates of duty are imposed upon spirits distilled in and imported from the Channel Islands into England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively. Whether imports may take place under that act depends, of course, upon the relative state of the markets.

“16. From the foregoing statements it appears that, besides the duties charged on spirits, of

7s. 10d. in England,

3s. 8d. in Scotland,

2s. 8d. in Ireland,

they are subject to a charge for duty on the malt used when made from a mixture of malt and unmalted grain of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per gallon, which is applicable to three-fourths of the whole quantity distilled. And when made from malt wholly, to a charge not exceeding 6d. per gallon, which cannot, however, be correctly ascertained without official returns, though it may, perhaps, be inferred from the Act of Parliament already mentioned, that the reduced drawback of 8d. per gallon was, consider-



ing the superior quality of the spirit produced, deemed equivalent to the duty on all the real malt used. Home-made spirits are further liable to such duty as may be charged upon deficiencies occurring while in bond.

“17. In compensation for these charges, the home distiller enjoys many advantages over his competitor in the Colonies. Instead, however, of entering into a minute estimate of the several distinctions which exist between home-made spirits and rum, it would be greatly better to adopt a simple and uniform system of levying *equal* duties on both in the three divisions of the United Kingdom respectively, or, at all events, to make only such a difference of duty in each as shall be equivalent to the duty charged on the malt actually used.

“18. With this view the following suggestions are submitted for consideration :—

First. That the duty on malt used in distillation be commuted into an additional duty on spirits, and the same be chargeable also on rum ; as follows :—

In England 8s., instead of 7s. 10d.,

Scotland 4s., instead of 3s. 8d.,

Ireland 2s. 10d., instead of 2s. 8d ;

or, that a distinction shall be made in favour of home-made spirits,—in England and Ireland of 2d. per gallon, and in Scotland of 4d. per gallon ; as follows :—



In England the duty on home-made  
spirits to continue at . . . . 7s. 10d.

and rum to be . . . . . 8s.

In Ireland home-spirits to continue

at . . . . . 2s. 8d.

and rum to be . . . . . 2s. 10d.

In Scotland home-spirits to con-

tinue at . . . . . 3s. 8d.,

and rum to be . . . . . 4s.

Second. That home-made spirits be permitted to be bonded throughout the United Kingdom.

Third. That the duty be charged on the quantity actually delivered for consumption.

Fourth. That the mixture of home-made spirits and rum in bond be prohibited, and official sanction thereby withdrawn from the preparation of spurious rum.

Fifth. That rum be permitted to be retailed under the same regulations as home-made spirits.

“This Memorandum has reference only to such charges as have been imposed, and which may therefore be altered, by Parliament. But it may be observed, that after these have been equitably adjusted, according to the suggestions now submitted, home-made spirits will still enjoy a great advantage in consequence of the distance of the West Indies, and the circumstances under which their rum is distilled.”

At a subsequent period, the Committee considered it their duty to renew their representations concerning the use of sugar and molasses in the breweries and distilleries, and on that subject they transmitted the following statement :—

“ MEMORANDUM by the Acting Committee of West India Planters and Merchants relative to the use of Sugar and Molasses in the Breweries and Distilleries.

“ The exclusion of sugar and molasses from the breweries and distilleries is a grievance from which the West India Colonies have long suffered, and against which they have often complained in vain.

“ In bringing this subject again under the consideration of Her Majesty’s Government, the Committee do not deem it necessary to advert particularly to the various reasons which have hitherto been alleged in justification of this restriction.

“ These have generally assumed the form of objections on the part of the revenue, but it has been shown in evidence before Parliament that they are illusory, and that it is quite unnecessary for the purpose of raising revenue to exclude brewers or distillers, or other manufacturers, from the use of any wholesome ingredient which they may consider to be fitted for their productions.

“ On the other hand, it is obvious that the effect of the prohibition has been to give to one class of Her Majesty’s subjects a monopoly to the disad-

vantage of every other class in the mother-country, as well as in the Colonies.

“ The Committee do not, indeed, entertain any doubt that Her Majesty’s Government will acknowledge that this prohibition cannot be longer maintained consistently with the commercial policy which has recently been adopted.

“ If circumstances had not been unfavourable to deliberate legislation at the close of the last session of Parliament, the Committee are bound to believe that Her Majesty’s Government would have proposed the repeal of this prohibition simultaneously with the introduction of the Sugar Duties Bill, whereby the Colonies have been exposed to competition which they are ill prepared to encounter.

“ A liberal, or even just, consideration of their condition would have suggested that this, as well as other remedial acts, should rather precede than follow any material alteration of the differential duties on sugar.

“ These duties have never afforded to the West India Colonies an equivalent for the restrictions imposed upon their agriculture and trade. They have been, and still are, shackled in procuring labour to cultivate their lands,—in importing their necessary supplies—and in selling their commodities.

“ The mere abrogation of such restrictions,—affecting as they do every process of production,—cannot remove all their injurious effects, or immediately enable the planter, who has long been subjected to their pernicious influence, to attain the

independent position he might have occupied but for their existence.

“ The Committee, therefore, conceive they are entitled to expect that Her Majesty’s Government will avail themselves of the earliest opportunity to unfetter the Colonies in every respect, and, among other means of relief, to grant permission for the free use of sugar and molasses in the breweries and distilleries.

“ They are aware that this permission ought, in the ordinary course of legislation, to be given by an Act of Parliament,—but they respectfully submit that the state and prospects of the markets for grain, and especially barley and malt, are such as would fully justify Her Majesty’s Government in granting it by an Order in Council.

“ The Committee trust that, under these circumstances, this concession will thus be made without further delay, not only as an act of justice to the West India Colonies, but also as a measure equally demanded by the general interests of the mother-country.

“ WEST INDIA COMMITTEE ROOMS,  
24th October, 1846.”

“ *To the Right Hon. Charles Wood,*  
*Chancellor of the Exchequer,*  
*&c. &c. &c.*

24th October, 1846.

“ SIR,

“ I have the honour to transmit, on behalf of the West India Committee, a Memorandum



relative to the use of sugar and molasses in the breweries and distilleries, which they hope will receive the early and favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

“ With reference to the statement which was submitted to you in August, touching the duties on home-made spirits and Colonial rum, the Committee also trust that Her Majesty's Government will be pleased to issue an Order in Council to equalize these duties, inasmuch as by permitting the competition of rum with home-made spirits, a greater quantity of grain will be immediately rendered available for food.

“ I have, &c.

(signed) “ A. MACGREGOR.”

Upon the subjects of the foregoing communications, the Committee have had several interviews with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It will be recollected that that Minister, during the discussions which took place last session, explicitly “ admitted that rum and British spirits ought to be upon precisely the same footing ;” and that he frankly adopted equality of privilege as a sound general principle, and gave the most positive assurances of his intention to act upon it. The Committee are disposed to confide in these declarations. Indeed, it seems impossible that Her Majesty's Government can follow any other course than concede without further delay the claims of the Colonies to

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perfect freedom of trade. After all the discourses upon the wonderful advantages of ‘competition’ which have been addressed to them, who will stand forth to deny the application of its wholesome influence to any interest in the state? To attempt to maintain any degree of monopoly to their prejudice, however specious the pretext, would be an exhibition of glaring inconsistency.

It has sometimes been insinuated that, notwithstanding the abolition of the differential duties on sugar, the mother-country would perhaps be justified in still maintaining some of those oppressive imposts and restrictions which operate against the Colonies, because she continues to afford them military protection. If this argument were well founded, the question—whether a cheaper system could be devised—would be worthy of serious consideration. But there is a prevalent misapprehension on this subject which, it is hoped, investigation and discussion will speedily correct. Many of Her Majesty’s possessions abroad are merely military or maritime stations: others combine with this character the advantages of agricultural colonies. The West Indies are included in this second category; and, considering their geographical position, and the general interests of our commerce, it is obvious that we should have to garrison several of them if they were as barren as Gibraltar or St. Helena. Whatever charge, therefore, may be incurred in occupying them, ought to be classed under the same

head of expenditure as military and maritime stations ; for the adventitious circumstance that they are also productive possessions cannot surely be deemed a disadvantage. But this expense—in as far as they are concerned—must, in fact, be wholly incurred in protecting them from the consequences of our own quarrels with other powers. The West India Colonies have no occasion to engage in warfare on their own account : on the contrary, their interests are altogether pacific, and, instead of deriving any advantage from being involved in our disputes, they are subjected to serious inconvenience and loss. If we were to refuse, in the event of war, to contribute to their defence, it is to be presumed that we would permit them to adopt whatever means they could employ to defend themselves. The simplest method of averting all aggression would be to declare an absolute neutrality. If they could proclaim their desire to maintain peace and free intercourse with all nations, they need not fear any molestation. For the purpose of repelling a marauding expedition, or of maintaining an efficient internal police, a well-organized militia might be available at every point ; and a powerful league might be formed, including eventually the whole Western Archipelago, for mutual support.

The bonds of union may be relaxed ; but the British people in the West India Colonies have as ardent a love of the mother-country as any of Her Majesty's subjects, and she has still many motives

to cherish this attachment. It is consistent with all their claims for freedom of trade and intercourse, that the navigation between them should be restricted as heretofore, like the coasting trade, to the British flag—that she should retain the government and patronage—the control of their tariffs—and secure beneficial markets for her productions, without any interruption from war or caprice.

## APPENDIX.

*West India Committee Rooms, Old Jewry,  
12th August, 1846.*

MY LORD,

With reference to the interview which a deputation from this Committee had with your Lordship yesterday, I have the honour to invite your attention to a communication which I addressed to Mr. Secretary Gladstone on the 17th June last, on the subject of emigration from Africa to the West India Colonies,—and more particularly to the following propositions therein made:—

1. That contracts for service to be performed in the West India Colonies shall henceforth be valid, though made in any of the British settlements—or in the Kroo country—on the West Coast of Africa—under the same conditions as contracts made in any other country than Africa or India.

2. That free emigration shall be permitted direct from all these places to the West India Colonies—and that the same rate of bounty shall be applicable to emigrants from thence as may be payable upon the introduction of emigrants from Sierra Leone.

3. That emigration agents shall be appointed at each of these stations, to be remunerated as follows:—At Sierra Leone as already arranged—in the Kroo country in like manner—and at the other settlements by a rate *per capita*, which shall be sufficient to include all requisite sub-agency.

4. That instructions similar to those which have been issued from the Foreign department to the officers at the foreign stations of Mixed Commission Courts, shall be given for the removal to the West Indies of all Africans who may be liberated at Sierra Leone—as recommended by Mr. Macaulay, formerly Judge of the Mixed Commission Court there.

The Committee trust it will be convenient for your Lordship to give early consideration to this important subject.

I have, &c.,

(signed)

A. MACGREGOR.

*Downing Street, 29th August, 1846.*

SIR,

I am directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th inst., calling his attention to your letter to Mr. Gladstone of the 17th June, and particularly to your proposals on the subject of emigration from Africa to the West Indies, which you recapitulate.

Lord Grey requests you to observe to the West India Committee, that it would not be easy for him to express more strongly than he feels it, the sense of the importance of giving to the planters every facility which can be lawfully and properly afforded for obtaining an adequate supply of free labour.

He has come to the consideration of the proposals made by the Committee, with this feeling as to the object of them,—regarding it as an object not merely West Indian, but in the widest sense of the word national; and still further, as comprehending interests of humanity not bounded by any national limits.

He is therefore most anxious to discover some unobjectionable means by which further facilities may be given to this emigration, nor does he see any reason for abandoning the hope that he may succeed in doing so; but he



regrets to find that he cannot concur in the greater part of the proposals now made.

1st. He would have no objection to contracts for labour made in Africa, under the superintendence of Government agents, with Africans who should be certified to be capable of understanding, and to have actually understood, the meaning of the obligation which they incurred ; such contracts not to be for a longer term than one year, and to be subject to the same conditions as were required by Mr. Gladstone in the case of contracts made elsewhere than in Africa and India.

Lord Grey would give his sanction to such contracts, however, chiefly in deference to the wishes and opinions of the West India Committee, being himself doubtful whether, even for that limited time, they would be of any real avail ; whilst he is persuaded that were they to be entered into for longer periods, they would lead to constant disputes and misunderstandings between employer and labourer, and to unwilling and ineffective services. Past experience so strongly supports this view of the subject, that Lord Grey does not see how it is possible to anticipate any other result ; the failure of the attempt made some years ago to carry out agricultural labourers from this country to New South Wales under indentures to the persons who had paid for their passage, and the unsatisfactory working of the system of apprenticeship in the West Indies and in the Mauritius, are instructive examples how little such endeavours to secure efficient labour are calculated to succeed. The still more recent experience of the employment of Coolies in the Mauritius leads to the same inference, that unless it is the interest of the labourer to remain with his employer and to exert himself, the attempt by law to compel him to do so necessarily leads to a severity of penal coercion not to be justified for such purposes ; whilst the result would be to bring the whole system of emigration into unpopularity and discredit, and to render the continuance of it impracticable.

2nd. Lord Grey is quite ready to permit and to encourage emigration from any British settlement on the coast of Africa, and to permit the bounties now payable on emigrants from Sierra Leone to be paid on emigrants from the other settlements, if any can be procured. And with respect to the Kroo country where there are no British settlements, his Lordship would receive, with the greatest desire to find them practicable, any suggestions which the West India Committee might have to offer for effecting an emigration from the Kroo coast, with adequate securities against abuse. It would, of course, be necessary to ascertain, in the most conclusive manner, that the operations on this coast should not extend to any tribes amongst which slavery has any existence, or to any individuals who are not in a state of absolute personal independence, and both free to choose and capable of making an intelligent choice. An emigration conducted under any other circumstances, whatever might be the benefits to the emigrants themselves, would lead to all those barbarities of the inland African slave-trade, and the wars undertaken to feed it, which are amongst the worst consequences of the trade by sea.

3rd. Lord Grey would have no objection to the appointment, should it be found to be worth the expense, of emigration agents at the other British settlements on the coast of Africa on the same terms as at Sierra Leone, to be paid by salary in like manner; but the payment by a rate per head on the emigrants obtained is objectionable, as tending to encourage a want of due caution on the part of the agent, both as to the means used to procure emigrants and as to the quality of the emigrants procured.

4th. With regard to the Africans liberated at Sierra Leone, Her Majesty's Government has no power by law to compel them to emigrate, and the Governor has already been informed that it is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that they should as much as possible be induced to do so, as the course, in every way, the most advantageous

to themselves. With this view, the Governor has been instructed to prevent squatting on lands outside of the Colony, and to prevent also the extension of its boundaries.

Lord Grey is not at present aware of any further measures by which he can evince to the West India Committee his anxious desire to meet their views, and promote a supply of free labour in the West Indian Colonies; but he begs to assure the Committee, that he will be at all times ready to give the most careful attention to any suggestions which they may make in furtherance of an object which is as much that of Her Majesty's Government as of the Committee themselves.

I have, &c.

(Signed) B. HAWES.

A. Macgregor, Esq.

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*West India Committee Rooms,  
Old Jewry, 10th Nov. 1846.*

MY LORD,

I have had the honour to receive Mr. Hawes's letter, dated 29th August, written by your Lordship's direction, in reply to the proposals respecting emigration from Africa which were addressed, on behalf of the West India Committee, to Mr. Secretary Gladstone in my letter dated 17th June, and subsequently submitted to your Lordship.

While the Committee have been much gratified by your just appreciation of the vast importance of this object, they have been no less disappointed to find your Lordship's earnest expressions of interest in its success followed by a declaration that you cannot concur in the greater part of the proposals which they have made, and that you are yet unprepared to suggest any better means of promoting it.

Although these proposals were made after mature consideration, the Committee, in deference to your Lordship,

have instituted further inquiries before replying to that communication. They have also, in the mean time, had frequent opportunities of conferring with parties, some of them recently arrived from Africa, who are well acquainted with the British settlements and the Kroo country, and the result of these inquiries has been a full confirmation of the views which they were previously led to entertain.

The Committee observe that your Lordship is ready to permit an attempt to be made to induce emigration from these settlements, and to appoint agents on behalf of the West India Colonies for that purpose, but that you decline to allow their remuneration to depend in any degree upon their success. It cannot, of course, be expected that a desire to emigrate can be created among the people in the vicinity of these settlements for some time after the existing restriction shall be removed. According to the plan suggested by the Committee, the agents would not become chargeable to the Colonies until their exertions to diffuse information should prove successful, and yet they would have an assurance of adequate compensation for them in that event, which would be the only satisfactory proof the Colonies could have of their active service. From experience in other cases, where salaries were fixed without reference to the number of emigrants, the Committee apprehend that these appointments would entail considerable expense upon the Colonies and still be fruitless. Unless, therefore, the remuneration shall be made, at least partly, proportionate to the number of suitable emigrants, they are not disposed to recommend the expense to be incurred. There is, however, ample evidence to show the possibility of gradually establishing a considerable emigration from all these settlements.

It has been with deep regret that the Committee have received your Lordship's refusal to permit a direct intercourse between the Kroo coast and the West India Colonies. They know not what additional proof can be required to convince your Lordship of the propriety of



such a measure. The Kroo people are at present allowed to emigrate indirectly ; but they must first make a coasting voyage of several hundred miles to Sierra Leone at their own expense, and at the risk of being detained there for an indefinite period before finding an opportunity to embark for the West Indies. This regulation is well designed to convert an apparent permission into a practical prohibition. Yet it is difficult to discover any difference in the nature of the emigration now permitted, and that which the Committee have proposed.

With regard to the Africans liberated at Sierra Leone, the statement made by Mr. Hawes appears to be at variance with the evidence given by Mr. Macaulay before the Committee appointed by the House of Commons, in 1842, to inquire into the state of the British possessions on the West Coast of Africa. That gentleman, who was formerly a Judge of the Court of Mixed Commission at Sierra Leone, and who may be presumed to know the laws applicable to these people, not only recommends earnestly that they should be removed to the West Indies for their own benefit, but refers to the authority under which they may be so conveyed. The Act which he quotes (question 5543 of his evidence) is 5 Geo. IV., c. 112, by which it appears that Her Majesty's Government have the power of binding these people as apprentices for seven years, to such persons and in *such places* as they may think fit. The practice was for a long time to apprentice them for that period, to persons within the settlement of Sierra Leone, and they were reduced there to a state of bondage. The abuses under this system became so flagrant that it was some years ago abandoned, though rumours prevail that it has been recently revived. The condition of these people was so miserable in 1841, when Dr. Madden, Her Majesty's Commissioner, visited Africa, that, in his Report, which will be found in the Appendix to the Parliamentary Report already mentioned, at page 245, he states:—  
 “ If the liberated Africans were not a patient race, inured



“ to suffering, and accustomed to bear privations, it certainly would be impossible to keep the population that is located in the villages in their places. They would abandon their farms, and flock into Freetown to look for bread.” At a subsequent period, Governor Fergusson describes their condition, under the existing system, in a despatch to Lord Stanley, dated 9th July, 1844, as follows :—“ These people are employed altogether as unpaid servants ; they are fed—scantily, if at all, clothed—and have no pecuniary allowance whatever.”

The Committee cannot believe that these and other similar facts have been brought under your Lordship’s notice. In adverting to them they do not presume to offer any suggestions concerning the government of Her Majesty’s possessions in Africa. But they cannot avoid remarking, that if such language could be employed with respect to any of the West India Colonies, it would not—as it ought not to—be long regarded with indifference. And they trust your Lordship will not think they have any desire to interfere further than to show that the welfare of the unhappy victims of the slave-trade who may be rescued by the British cruizers, would be much better secured by settling them in the West India Colonies than in Sierra Leone, where it is obvious they cannot by their labour earn the means of a comfortable subsistence.

On the subject of contracts, the Committee apprehend that their views have been misunderstood by your Lordship. No proprietor would wish to incur the trouble and risk of resorting to Africa, or any other distant country, to procure labourers, if he could hire them near his plantation. Necessity only could induce him to go beyond the limits of the Colony for that purpose. The Committee conceive that contracts ought, nevertheless, to be sanctioned ; and that, if adopted, they may without any difficulty be rendered effectual.

The nature of the agriculture in every country must regulate the terms of employment. In the West Indies it

would be worse than useless to plant sugar-canes, without some assurance that labourers would be found to reap them. If brought from a distance, houses and grounds must be prepared for them. These arrangements cannot be made upon an uncertainty. So in the best cultivated parts of the mother-country, where labour is abundant, agricultural servants are hired by the half-year or the year. There is, in fact, a necessity in most cases for such engagements,—at least they are highly expedient,—because the cottages on each farm must be occupied by the ploughmen and others who are to take charge of the stock and work the land, else great loss might ensue. Nor is there any benefit to the labourers, but the reverse, in such brief contracts as render them unsettled and migratory.

The Committee are not aware that reference can be made to any past experience of such contracts as they have proposed. Between their conditions and those to which Mr. Hawes alludes there is no similarity. The shepherd who goes to Australia is generally bound to serve for three or four years at definite wages. When he arrives there he learns, that if he were free he could get more. The country is immense and unpeopled: he perceives that he may abandon his employment with impunity, and he is tempted to break his engagement. But the labourer, proceeding to the West Indies under such contracts as have been proposed by the Committee, will be in circumstances totally different. He may, in like manner, find the current rate of wages higher than what he has stipulated to receive; but, instead of having to regret his contract, he will, in virtue of its imperative clauses, be entitled at once to claim that higher rate, and consequently have no motive to infringe it. Or, even if he should fancy a different locality or employment, he will be at liberty to transfer his services upon giving a reasonable notice. Besides, if he should, notwithstanding these considerations, wantonly disregard his contract and

desert, it is highly probable that he will shortly be discovered, and in that case he ought of course to be punished, exactly as a person for a similar offence may be punished in this country. If your Lordship will manifest, as is generally expected, a determination to have an efficient magistracy and police in each Colony, there need be no difficulty in requiring both masters and servants to observe their respective engagements, though the Committee readily admit that the best assurance of good service is to be found in a sufficient supply of labour, and consequent competition for employment.

The Committee have not failed to observe, that in Mr. Hawes's letter, as in preceding communications from the Colonial Department relating to emigration from Africa, it is vaguely insinuated that their proposals, if adopted, might lead to great abuse. Upon this plea have they been successively rejected, or so modified as to render them nugatory. Having, however, on former occasions, refuted these allegations, the Committee will now only deny that any proposal which has ever emanated from them has the slightest tendency to produce other than most beneficial effects upon the whole African race. Their desire has been, and, if permitted, their endeavour would be, to substitute a well-ordered emigration of free-men to our free Colonies for the deportation of slaves to foreign states. In the attainment of this object the Committee had confidently anticipated your Lordship's cordial support and active assistance.

I have, &c.,

(signed)

A. MACGREGOR.

*The Right Hon. the Earl Grey,*  
*&c. &c. &c.*







*With Mr. Davis's compliments*

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## THE WEST INDIES.

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— The Devil he grinn'd—for he saw all the while,  
How she cut her own throat—and he said with a smile,  
‘ This is England’s Commercial Prosperity ! ’

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[From the pen of a Gentleman recently arrived, and  
who intends to départ again for Jamaica immediately.]

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## THE WEST INDIES.

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THE Reform Bill is the all-engrossing subject at the present moment ; yet who can help seeing that the question of the Colonies comes next, and how many are there who may not have to rue its result?—Ministers have declared that the wheels of government cannot go on without West-India taxation.

Have the members of the House of Commons considered how many interests must be sacrificed to so universal a measure of destruction? The very shoe which is worn by a sailor in the West-India trade, and the food and clothing of his family—are they not paid for in the freight of sugars? and is not the money given to the British manufacturers, who may otherwise find no means of employment? The timber-merchant, and the owners of vessels engaged in the timber trade ; the workmen engaged in building and refitting vessels ; the manufacturers of iron, copper, ropes, canvas, &c., down to the followers of almost the



meanest arts that can be named, are not alone employed in equipping a ship, but in furnishing supplies to the Colonies. Are then the resources of all these persons and their families to be sacrificed? and will not the taxation doubly laid upon each of the separate articles be so much more lost to the revenue? and are the people of England prepared for so great a crash? Will they not, on the contrary, examine, before it is too late, what it is that constitutes the true commercial greatness of the Country, and how large a part the Colonies bear, in sustaining the active principle which keeps the entire commerce of the Empire in motion?

Does not a limited amount in gold give action to the whole circulating currency of the state? and is it because there are so many wealthy individuals in the country, that an impulse may not be equally indispensable in matters of commerce? Is sixteen millions, (one-third of your revenue,) which the Colonies produced under a better government, contemptible?

Or, do the people of England really believe that the Negroes either can or will cultivate sugar, if left to themselves? Look at St. Domingo, in spite of her Code Rural! Look anywhere else that you please! It is impossible! Not that the labour is excessive, for the work performed by three Negroes does not equal that of a single Englishman; but that an order of labour must be observed: a system of combined exertion is

necessary, such as can find no place in the Negro mind. A sugar estate, like a watch, has many wheels in motion at the same time; and if you displace one, you take away the efficiency of the whole. Of coffee, Negroes, undirected, might produce a little, because the same individual can plant the tree, and pick and dry the berry: but any thing else, whereon to lay a duty, England would look for in vain. Is further proof required? Then advertise, in the Jamaica newspapers, for free people to do the work of a sugar estate, even at double hire, and see whether you will obtain a single labourer!

Why are not the Maroon Negroes in Jamaica industrious? They are free, and they enjoy the most ample protection; yet the actual condition of these people is much inferior, for the most part, to that of the Slaves upon the estates. Even Free Negroes, who turn fishermen, if they catch and sell a single good fish, will work no more until the money which they receive for it is spent. If the industry of the Slaves could possibly be depended upon, does England think that, under the injuries which she inflicts upon the West Indies, the Colonists would not unite with those Slaves against her?

Never did Colonists, at any period of existence, groan under the persecutions of so unnatural a parent! Exposed, among a different race of people, in the fearful disproportion of thirty to one, our throats are at each moment invited to be

cut! Property in our Slaves we are said to possess none! Now, where else is to be found the climax of human persecution?

Do you insist that Negroes ought not to be inured to habits of common industry? and can you look around you, in any part of the empire, and discover either the wealth of the rich, or the content of the poor, derived from other sources? Few things are there in the world, but will show, like the picture, a dark as well as a pleasing side; and happiness and unhappiness are but relative terms. Convince the monarch that his situation is worse than it ought to be, and *he* will be unhappy! Show the peasant, on the contrary, that his is better than his neighbour's; and he, though starving, will no longer repine! So it is with our Negroes. Once they, too, were happy; but they are now happy no longer, simply because they are taught to compare their actual situation with the improved one most illusively held out to them in prospect!

There is, however, another view of the subject, less thought of by the public of England, but to which, for a moment at least, it may not be wholly unreasonable to turn. What, while we are speaking, is the situation of the Masters of the Slaves? An average sugar estate—or, to name an express example—New Hall, in the parish of St. Thomas in the Vale, produced, last year, about one hundred and fifty-seven hogsheads of beautiful sugar, with a due proportion of rum; and,

upon making up the account of the whole year's transactions, it was found that,—without allowing any thing for the support of the proprietor and his family—without allowing a penny for interest upon the investment of a large capital,—an actual loss accrued, which required to be made good by that unfortunate proprietor ; while, at the same time, the British revenue at home was enriched upwards of four thousand pounds, in duties upon the produce of that very estate, for the year in question ! The example, in the mean time, is a favourable one, as to the present state of West-India property ; for New Hall produces excellent sugar, and cannot but be flourishing, when compared with estates lying in parts of the island of which the produce is of less marketable value !

But we are told, in reply to exhibitions of facts like these, that if the cultivation of sugar will not pay the cultivator, it ought to be given up, and something else resorted to ; and we, by way of answer, inquire, what other description of West-India produce can be pointed out, which British taxation would not (nay, which *has* not) rendered as unprofitable and ruinous as sugar itself ?

In the face, however, of all this, an Order in Council issues commanding that the proprietors shall supply their Slaves with the article of shoes ! If we declare, that in the hot climates of the West Indies the Negroes will not, except upon holidays, incumber and heat their feet with shoes, our declaration is refused belief ! If we instance



the example, that even His Majesty's black troops, going from Kingston to Spanish-town (a distance of thirteen miles), prefer carrying their shoes in their hands, it will be denied ! And all this results from the appointment to the Colonial Ministry of such persons as Lord Howick, whose greatest ability lies in the Parliamentary application of his peripatetic acquirements to the distortion of whatever may be said by a member of the Assembly of Jamaica. How ungenerously has he not culled from the speech of one of those members a single sentence, in order to draw from it a conclusion the very opposite of that which is its due ?

With reference to the debate upon the Slave Code, in the Assembly of the island of Jamaica, the Governor had informed the House, by message, that his peremptory instructions were to pass no bill, containing a restriction upon any species of religious worship, unless it also contained a *suspending clause* ; when some of the members declared, that to pass any bill with that accompaniment would be a breach of the Constitution of Jamaica. The Report of a Mr. John Shand, in 1809, was referred to, showing that this very point had been the most obstinate subject of contention between the Parent State and the Colony, since the abandonment of Poyning's, or the Irish system. The Assembly insisted that it had the necessary right of passing bills to come into instant operation, in order to guard against possible



consequences, of the urgency of which persons at the distance of four thousand miles could neither be competent nor timely judges; and that the Governor, in his negative, was already provided with the constitutional authority of the Crown, while a still further power remained, in the right of Ministers, to disallow any act that had been passed, as soon as they should think proper so to do. If I mistake not, a message to the Governor was either proposed, or had been sent, declaring that the House would not deliberately sacrifice its rights; and that, upon such a basis, it would wholly decline entering upon the measure of the Slave Code. It was, then, upon this express occasion, seeking to get the House to depart from a fixed resolution, which (while the Governor, on his part, had received opposite, unqualified instructions,) operated to shut the door against all conciliation, that the member alluded to used, among many other arguments, the following:—

“ So far, Sir, from thinking the introduction of a suspending clause a measure likely to overturn our Constitution, or any of our best interests, I must say, that I can easily imagine cases, in which, with adroitness, we might turn it to infinite advantage. We may happen to be so circumstanced, as necessarily to pass Bills which we may wish to submit to a further revision; doubtful and careless,—careless!—even wishful, rather!—that they should not be confirmed.”

I do not hesitate to avow myself the member who uttered the words thus quoted. But I ask any honourable and candid mind to peruse the whole speech, and then judge whether I deserve the imputation of base purposes, made against me by Lord Howick, and the contemptible commiseration for myself, which was naturally elicited from Mr. Horace Twiss?

To be a member of the Jamaica Assembly is, in effect, to be exposed as a fair mark for insult upon the part of the British Government—persons unknown to the real British Constitution and laws, who, in the King's name, (while they permit him to have no real authority over them,) assume a power, such as has now become an overgrown abuse. Answerable alone through a plurality of votes in Parliament, (obtained by what means it matters not,) they may safely enough offer any insult they please to a defenceless subject in another part of the empire.

Ministers, however, effected their purpose. The Slave Bill passed; and *I* had the satisfaction of being taunted by my friends with the courteous return which had been made me for my services, by the Noble Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Lord Viscount Howick!

Who can read, without a jaundiced eye, the very paragraph in question, and not admit that it seeks to encourage a firm reliance upon the better judgment of the Parent Country, and the justice of the cause itself? My motives were not

to please His Majesty's Government, but to benefit the Slave. I am at this time convinced that, to accomplish the first of those objects, the destruction of all Colonial interests must be the sole basis of a man's conduct! Fair-dealing with the King's Ministers is a thing out of the question, for they are unacquainted with it in their own conduct. They, by a Colonial constitution of their own creation, are the *hated oppressors of the Colonies!* If England (putting aside the mere rant and cant of the moment) intends to preserve her distant possessions, the sooner she frames a new form of government for them the better! If she is determined to destroy the West Indies, the latter may do well to imitate South America; and, accomplishing the overthrow of British West-India dominion themselves, leave England alone, to contemplate the progress of her own ruin!

Monstrous truly, that because Earl Grey has been thought qualified to fill the office of Premier of England, his son must necessarily be born with an intuitive knowledge of the internal affairs of the West Indies! The East Indians have a Board of Control, as well as a Board of Directors; and why, let me ask, have not the West Indians the same—with persons at their head, capable of *answering* questions, instead of asking them?

It may be easy enough, in the imagination of an English public, and even in that of an English Parliament or Ministry, to suppose that you can

console (if, indeed, his consolation is any object with you!) a West-India proprietor, by generously informing him, that if his property produces nothing, he ought to relinquish it; but what, in the mean time, is to become of the immense capital which he has invested, and what is to become of his dependent Slaves? Who is to feed and clothe these latter, and to enforce orders among them, which, even for their sakes only, are indispensably needful?—"Oh! give them up," you will say, "the property!"—Yes, as you have given up the Crown Estates in other Colonies; and which, in consequence, will become, once more, wildernesses! Where, then, would the British Exchequer look for its duties upon West-India sugar, of twenty-four shillings per hundred-weight? and what would become of the profits of freight, (not to mention exported manufactures,) and of other contingencies advantageous to the Mother Country, making, in the aggregate, a sum of thirty-two shillings and sixpence per hundred-weight, while the produce itself may not sell for more than forty shillings, leaving, in that case, but seven shillings and sixpence to the proprietor! wherewith to cultivate and manufacture a most expensive staple, and to clothe and maintain his Negroes, himself, and his family?

A West Indian of Jamaica is irresponsible to the British Government for any harshness of opinion. The whole island has collectively set forth the enormous list of relentless cruelties practised



upon it by the Mother Country, and declared its wish to change such an allegiance. We cannot seek to destroy the British Government, but have only in view to preserve our own property and lives. Refer to your constitutional principles, and you will acknowledge that there is no power which is authorized to make us the victims of laws to which we have given no consent!

We are justified if we protest against assisting you to pay a National Debt which we were no party in contracting. We declare that an unnatural desire to persecute your dependents (the American Colonists), and, at another time, a vain-glory and a squandering of money among European Continental States, was the occasion of this Debt; and that, while in the latter instance we had no voice, in the former we are ourselves the unwilling remnant of your Colonial victims (in our own case doubly fettered); and, under such circumstances, is it reasonable to *ask*, and, still more, to *expect*—our willing contributions?

The American Colonists complained—and they resisted. They declared, that they would not consent to “live, move, and have their being, at the arbitrary will of any licentious Minister;”—they declared, that they would not allow you to appoint their public officers—not even their magistracy; and insisted upon being governed by rulers of their own choosing, not to be in subjection to the arbitrary power of strangers,



proceeding by no established laws, but at their own discretion; and they told you, that had they entertained any fears of ever being deprived of these rights, they “never would have wandered from their *fathers’ houses* into these *ends of the earth*, nor laid their labours and estates therein.” They implored your sense of justice; but, alas! England, then, as now, had no heart! and what was it left for them to do? Why, they “resolved to die by the hands of others, rather than their own.” They declared that they could call nothing their own, but were mere *tenants at will*; and that “the least shadow of liberty could not be preserved in a dependent connexion with Great Britain.”

You employed sixteen thousand foreign mercenaries to butcher them, and declared, by an Act of your Parliament, that the crews of their vessels, when taken, should be treated, not as prisoners of war, but as *slaves*. You compelled them to fight against their families, kindred, friends, and country;—a refinement in barbarity unknown even among savage nations!

The immortal Chatham became their advocate. Truth and feeling for a moment prevailed; and these were the sentiments he uttered: “The Americans have not acted, in all things, with prudence and temper. They have been wronged. They have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have

occasioned? Rather let prudence and temper come first from this side; I will undertake for America, that she will follow the example:—

“ Be to their faults a little blind;  
Be to their virtues very kind !”

Certain political principles, such as the following, as between the governors and the governed, were then admitted :—“ That protection and obedience were reciprocal ;”—“ that representation and taxation were equally so ;”—“ that external taxation did not imply any imposition which could be applied to purposes of revenue ; but merely to the protection of commerce ;”—and England, at the same time, offered to allow to the agents of the American Colonies seats in Parliament. But as the new preliminary to all concession, “ *unconditional* submission,” was required, the answer of the Colonists (who had in the mean time taken up arms against oppression) was, “ that no security could be afforded by an English promise !”

The Colonists fought; and England at least *backed out* by offering to rescind all her previous system of oppression. See the “Act for Removing all Doubts and Apprehensions concerning Taxation by the Parliament of Great Britain, in any of the Colonies, Provinces, and Plantations in North America and the *West Indies*.” England, in fact, offered “ the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege, short of a total separation of interests, or

(that was) consistent with that union of force on which the safety of their *common religion* and liberty depended." It was now, however, too late. The Colonists declared that they spurned all boons from England!

See the wisdom, then, of proud England, in that instance! But for this, her national debt would have been now paid! (if indeed ever incurred.) See, at the same time, the American Colonists become a great people, and without a farthing of their debt in arrear. If, looking to the geographical situation, there be not eventually an account to settle, about the Fisheries, and the Northern Provinces, the *Old Country* will be fortunate. Let Jefferson's "restrictive energies" be at this moment applied to the non-exportation of American cotton, and England is in rebellion!

A strange anomaly, truly! Here we have a nation limited in its home territory, and obliged to depend upon foreign states for the raw material of its manufactures, yet calmly contenting itself with the belief that it will be equally advantageous for her to depend upon foreign possessions; forgetful that *Colonies* can be likened but to extensions of home territory, in which *ships* supply the place of *bridges*, and with equal certainty, for all the purposes of trade, in their constant routine of regular arrivals!

Are the East Indies to become England's isolated boast of "Ships, Colonies, and Commerce?" And will she forget the slender thread by which

she holds those possessions? With the West Indies will she lose that superiority in her navy which enables her to tyrannise over her distant, defenceless, dependencies. Newfoundland, already shared by America, without a market, will no longer contribute to her nursery of seamen. The East Indies even now favour the Americans; and England's carrying trade, already gone, will never return.

Destruction marks the progress of all her steps! Let America join Russia, or France, and she is prostrate! Proud and imperious Rome, after having subjugated the world, and despoiled it of its treasures, fell a sacrifice to her own unbounded corruption.

Is there any hardship, amid the numberless provocations to American resistance, which England, in a tenfold degree, has not imposed upon the West Indies? Granted, that she has not hit exactly upon a Stamp Act nor a Tea Duty; but whence comes the pay of her troops stationed there, and her Custom-house salaries? Would there not be a sufficiency to meet those charges, in the sixteen millions which these Colonies once furnished?

The exercise of English patronage in the appointment of our officers—can anything be more flagrant? Has not the publication of a *secret* correspondence with a certain Noble Duke developed the existence of a deep-laid scheme to destroy all the rights of property among us?



Does not everything prove that we, like the Americans, have cause to complain of the influence of such intrigues, to the prejudice of our best interests? But, turn from our Executive department to our Judicial, and from our Judicial to our Legislative, and you will find, in every part, the prevalence of the same system; and thus, too, it must be so long as our masters continue to think and to act for us, at the distance of four thousand miles!

By chance we get a Governor too noble to act the part assigned him by the ministry. The Earl of Belmore is much respected in Jamaica. His family are a blessing to the island, and set an example which we have looked for in vain from the King's House many years previously. But we are aware that he has given offence to Lord Goderich; and to this, no doubt, may be attributed the rumour of his recall. A case of insult and persecution, got up against the Custos of Tre-lawny, of which Lord Belmore was assigned to be the conductor, naturally gave rise to feelings of disgust, in the mind of an honest-hearted nobleman, living upon the spot, and well acquainted with the falsehood of the entire charge. If the writer of these remarks is not greatly mistaken, it followed, upon this affair, that Lord Belmore addressed a letter to Lord Goderich, tendering his resignation.

The Governor, the Judges, the Attorney-general, the magistrates, and every public officer whom we can name, in this manner depend, like



the trunk and branches of a tree—nay, the subordinates, like the very leaves—owe their existence to the same unwholesome root.

See the prosecutions which have of late taken place in Jamaica, under attorney-generals who have no minds of their own, but obey the will of the Colonial Secretary. The evidence acquits the accused; yet still the people of England are persuaded to be dissatisfied with the verdicts of the juries. Gracious Heavens! is there to be no security for men's reputations, and are they to be stabbed by their own countrymen?

Send in, before a grand jury in England, an indictment charging a respectable individual with an act of dark criminality; whilst the prosecuting lawyer is unable to produce a shadow of proof, though he have the advantage of an *ex parte* statement; and is it nothing that a man's reputation is to be degraded thus far?—that the very charge should have been preferred against him?—that the witnesses should have had it made their interest to commit perjury? Infamous! infamous!

The Attorney-general, in the mean time, skreens himself beneath the authority with which the law invests him, to exercise, *ad libitum*, his own judgement; as if (good sooth!) he really dared to exercise any judgement contrary to the will of the Colonial Secretary. What would be done with such an Attorney-general in England, or with the Ministry which employed him?—Driven from their places by the indignant voice of the people!

But what can be done by us, the people of Jamaica, whose voice is not permitted to be heard? It is ours only to

“lick the hand just raised to shed our blood;”

and to give our pity to the instrument of oppression, whom, perhaps, if left to himself, we feel that we could esteem.

A Chief Justice, the brother of the *English* Sir James Scarlett, (for, though he was born in Jamaica, *we* have nothing to do with him,) considered himself equally bound to our masters, in the bonds of this corrupting influence. Laying aside the scales of the Judge, he lately pleaded in favour of an indictment before a grand jury. The accusation was, that a white man had besmeared a Negro with dung. Our Chief Justice charged twenty-three respectable men, thus assembled, that they would falsify their oaths in the eye of heaven, if they did not return a “true bill:” but alas! there came forward, to support the bill, anything but evidence. The foreman, (Mr. Maddan,) when the jury was called to be discharged, read a presentment, in which it was averred, that the Court had libelled the country; and, thereupon, our Sir William Scarlett, who had a fair opportunity of reply, contented himself with sitting quiet! But we must tread gently here;—Sir William is no more.

See the cases of dirty persecution, lately got up to suit the purposes of men whom, we are told,

we must look up to as protectors!—There is the case of a respectable old lady—Mrs. Clarke—who was charged, by Lord Goderich, with compelling her Negroes to steal grass! After several distressing investigations, the result was found to be, that the whole community, the lady's Negroes themselves inclusive, proved that she had ever been the most kind and indulgent parent to them! But here, an old lady, of seventy years of age, had been obliged to quit her bed, to appear, for the first time in her life, in a public Court, to defend herself against charges of inhumanity and infamy, in the institution of which the Ministry of Great Britain was arrayed against her!—It may be as well to add, in this place, an account of the evidence produced; it amounted, neither more nor less than to the following:—A Mr. Taylor (reputed a very religious man), the attorney (or superintendant) of a Mr. Wildman, gave a Negro-woman, belonging to Mrs. Clarke, a small sum of money in consideration (*inter alia*) of her affording him this evidence; which, however, the said Negro-woman, at every successive examination, denied to have given the said Mr. Taylor, adducing, also, corroborative proof that it was impossible she could have done so! True it is, that Lord Goderich ultimately declared the charge to have been sufficiently disproved, and that he endeavoured to pay the good old lady a compliment upon her acquittal.

There are many cases which have been similarly

investigated. In some, the slaves apply the corrosive juices of plants, to create sores, after the slightest punishment, suborned as they are, to procure their freedom, and a maintenance, out of the pocket of their unfortunate master. In others the charges are as various as invention can make them.

To relate a particular and recent one, in which the Custos of Port-Royal had been charged with oppression by a Dr. Pallmer, for having inflicted the punishment which you yourselves, in the Trinidad Order, substituted for flogging—namely, confinement (and that not closely) in the stocks. In this case also the utmost kindness of conduct was proved by the very party complaining.

Might not the first of her sex in England, with the virtuous indignation of a modest woman, snatch up the riding-whip of her husband, and strike a female servant at the moment when the latter had challenged her to

\* \* \*

And is this to occasion, as it did with Mr. Jackson, the erasure of his name from the head of the list of magistracy, and the loss of his property, not alone in that servant, but in her connexions? Well may Jamaica be tired of such a system!

Is it not your intention to pass by the Chief Justice whom our Governor has newly appointed, and the other experienced barristers of the country?—Are they too well acquainted with our real circumstances and situation? or, have they become tainted (as Mr. Sykes would say) with a residence



in the Colonies? You intend, no doubt, to send out one who shall be imbued with your millenium notions about the black lambs, and who shall be better able to deprive the Colonists of their property, through your particular construction of our laws;—throwing the proof, for instance, upon the master. Slavery, no doubt, will have to “escape through legal enactments!” Never has the world wanted lawyers who will undertake to construe a law to suit the purposes of power, if you will but allow them their own construction of the reasons for which that law was enacted. Blackstone tells us, that a law is null and void, if contrary to reason; that is to say, the reason of the Judge!

What can an English lawyer know of the statutes of Jamaica, or of their application? Will he engage to submit himself to even *my* examination? and will he explain the differences which exist between the English Writ of Elegit, and the Jamaica Writ of Extent? or between the Writs of Scire Facias and Capias ad Satisfaciendum, and our Writ of Venditioni Exponas? Will he be pleased to tell me how all the returns of our Courts are to be appropriated, under a system of priority unregulated by written laws, and of which there is no parallel in England? Probably, too, he may be able to point out the English statutes which are in force under our Jamaica Magna Charta (1 Geo. II. cap. i.).—Folly, that a Judge should conceive he can have learned, at an Inn of



Court in London, practices and adjudged cases of which we ourselves have not a single report !

Of evils and abuses which have a real existence, your Ministers are regardless. The Court of Chancery, in the hands of the Governor, becomes, in many instances, an engine of political abuse. Unacquainted with the principles of law, and without the assistance of a jury, a Governor passes his decision under the sole and fearful responsibility of his individual opinion ; and I believe that an instance has been known to occur, in which a Chancellor of this description tossed up (heads or tails ?) for his judgement. I have myself seen a former Chancellor of Jamaica constantly asleep and snoring during his sittings ; the same Governor and Judge was once awakened by a barrister, who vehemently threw his brief upon the table, accompanying the act with this exclamation, “ My Lord, so plain are my arguments, that a man *fast asleep* may understand them ! ” Solicitors’ costs, *in most cases assented to*, form the basis of these decisions, for no man will, if he can help it, expose his property to such an ordeal. The destitute widow and orphan alone are compelled to place themselves under its *protection*. Ask the mortgagee in England, or the more unfortunate proprietor in Jamaica, and he will tell you that if he escape unscathed, getting back merely his solicitor’s costs, he thinks himself fortunate.

Is our catalogue of Legislative abuses less than was America’s ? Do we know, at this very instant,

what our Constitution is, or whether, in point of fact, we have any at all? Our First Charter rendered waste paper, and the Imperial Parliament (in which we are not represented) claiming a power to legislate for us in all cases whatever,—do you leave us any thing but a shadow? Poyning's system averted for the moment, you attach suspending clauses to our laws, and place them upon your Colonial shelf, where, mingling with parent dust, they breathe their last! What security for our property have we? Are not our estates tenancies at the will of your Parliament? And where is the security for our persons? Better let us encounter the worst at once. Certain destruction is preferable to this continued state of feverish apprehension!

If a member of the Jamaica Legislature exercise his honest judgement, but do not accede to the wishes of a particular person of colour, he is insultingly kicked in public, as was Mr. Berry. If another member declare, in his place, that the march of concession o'ersteps that of the moral improvement of the slave population, he, by chance, becomes informed that, on a certain day, the lives of himself and family will be taken by a body of Negroes, who are all fully persuaded that the King of England has ordered his soldiers not to take part against them;—as was the case with Mr. Grignon!

Should Jamaica remain a colony of the United Kingdom, the time may come when no respectable man will condescend to take a seat in its

Legislature; and better, in that case, will it be for England to withhold no longer her threat of ruling by a Military Council. We shall save a great deal of money by that arrangement; paying, of course, no other taxes than those of a parochial nature. Out of evil often ariseth good; and I can picture to my mind's eye very many savings of a domestic nature:—public-road jobbings, which may just as well be handed over to the parishes;—the salaries of Speaker, Clerk, Serjeant at Arms, Messenger, Librarian, &c.;—unnecessary repetition and expense of annual laws;—additional salary to the Governor;—enormous saving in the support of the troops;—and (as we have a sufficient number of preachers among the Methodists, whom the Negroes are content to provide for) about thirty thousand pounds a year no longer needed for the Established Clergy! England, not very long ago, reprobated religious toleration (even in Jamaica) to that extent; but times are now altered, and all must turn *macaronie*\* hunters. Once, too, England had Ministers who considered measures adopted by a Colonial Legislature, and thus constitutionally sanctioned by the whole people whom they concerned, preferable to an arbitrary exercise of their own power, and more consistent with the general interests of the state. But, alas!—the march of intellect—what

\* Pieces of money of the value of one shilling and eightpence currency.

will it not accomplish? For my own part, I fully expect that, in the end, they will contrive a steam-engine which shall legislate for the Colonies. No longer need Chatham declare that “there is scarcely a man in the streets, though so poor as scarcely to be able to get his bread, but thinks he is the Legislator of the Colonies!” As for supporting further the religion of the State, the thing has become a bye-word. No doubt, we shall shortly have some treatise to prove, that the moral obligation of an oath has ceased to be the basis of civil society!

The time was, when we might have joined America in saying, “The people of England will soon have an opportunity of declaring our cause! In their piety, generosity, and good sense, we repose high confidence; and cannot, upon a review of past events, be persuaded, that they, the defenders of true religion, and the assertors of the rights of mankind, will take part against their affectionate Protestant brethren in the Colonies, in favour of our open, and their secret, enemies; whose intrigues, for several years past, have been wholly exercised in sapping the foundations of civil and religious liberty.”

Take a trip, O ye Methodists! to the Sunny Isles; and there, though ye preach secretly in

——— a cave

All overgrown with trailing odorous plants,

Which curtain out the day with leaves and flowers;—

—or assist, with Parson Charley and his daughter,



in the wilderness ;—or teach new enjoyments in heaven, where idleness is acknowledged for the only bliss, and a Negro is permitted to smoke his pipe by the side of the Almighty ;—or expound the history of Jonas, whom a Negro preacher will tell you was “ a h—ll of a fellow for fish, for him swallow a whole whale ! ”—in every thing make yourselves the panders of the Negro’s passions—it matters not in what particular : and, if you can find nothing else sufficient, preach *emancipation* ; make it appear that you are its emissaries ; assure the Negroes that want exists no where but in a state of slavery ; and that, if free, every Negro would possess all the advantages now monopolized in the single persons of their masters,—with white wives into the bargain ! If you find the better class of coloured and black females backward in their contributions, declare, with a certain reverend brother, who lately preached in Spanish Town, that money must be raised to build a chapel in *New Zealand*, and that they may easily procure the means of assisting, by the prostitution of their persons ;—for this appeared, most courteous reader, proved in evidence before the magistracy ! Stick at nothing ; give out, as did the Pastor of St. Ann’s, that you mean to preach concerning the recent rebellion of the Negroes in *Virginia* ; and, with the help of such an excitement, our own Clergy will meet the Slaves, leaving their Established churches, and flocking to you, sixty in a body ! Your *class-leaders*



will collect, and (if they are honest) forward to you, through so happy an effort, large showers of macaronies, and enable you (should you think proper) to make large remittances to Hatton Garden ! Offer admission-tickets even to dogs, if they will but pay for them ; and compel Mr. Rae's Blucher, at Port Maria, to take out a fresh one !

Is the reader wearied of this display ; and has it, or has it not, disgusted him ? Yet such is the real character of the system which Englishmen support, against their unfortunate fellow-subjects, the West-India Colonists ; and these are the men whom they pour in upon us !—men, who, if they preached obedience, would not live, and who therefore exist (nay, make fortunes) by teaching sedition, and that too in a community so fearfully constituted ! What protection has a West Indian against this destruction of his life and property ? Do not your Government refuse to sanction the whole Slave Code, if it contain any the slightest restriction against such persons ?—And who, after all, are these Methodist parsons ? With the exception of one or two, who undoubtedly are good men, what are their qualifications to teach, and by whom are they ordained ? Have they any responsible head, to whom the Island can look for redress, in any instance of their misconduct ?

But, let us take up another branch of our subject. Slavery was originally made a perquisite, even of the British Crown. America, which possesses, at this very moment, five times the number

of slaves in the whole British West Indies, protested against your introducing more among them: Jamaica did the same. And what was your answer?—that you would not permit a commerce to be restricted, which was so beneficial to your own merchants.

Are slaves, in the Colonies of any other country, or in any other situation, better treated than those in the British West Indies? Of what, then, do you complain? Is it that we do not—that we cannot—convert, all at once, an African Negro into a free-born Englishman? Did you not take hundreds of years to throw off your own more abject vassalage? and is it in the interval since the abolition of the Slave-trade, (1808,) when alone new introductions of native African barbarism were brought to a close, that we are expected to have accomplished the metamorphosis! We declare the impossibility, while we invite you to the Colonies, to try your skill in the undertaking! But, are our throats to be cut, because we cannot perform impossibilities?

What are the *specific* charges which you bring against us? Let us examine them. Against *general* charges you will hardly require us to offer a defence; for we might as reasonably be called upon to reply under every article of the decalogue. And yet, those charges which you may call *specific*, are little better, in reality, than *general*. For instance; you say that you require no stronger nor more conclusive proof of the ill-

treatment of the Slaves, than the fact of the annual decrease of their numbers. But what if we should satisfactorily answer this test of your proofs?—will you, then, adopt some other and equally *conclusive* hypothesis? and, if not completely answered at the first moment when it comes into your imagination, will your charity devote us, as before, to immediate destruction?

Let it be kept in mind, that, during the continuance of the Slave-trade, the average age of the African Negroes imported was thirty years. The Slave-trade was abolished in 1808—a period of twenty-four years since; and, from that date, (with ample opportunities for knowledge, I solemnly declare my own belief,) not a single African Slave has been imported into Jamaica. Some, I believe, were once removed from the Bahamas, where they had no provision grounds. There were, of course, even in 1808, many aged Negroes in the island, as well as very many more, of all ages at and above thirty; but supposing, even, that in the year 1808 the average had been thirty—add twenty-four years to thirty, and you have fifty-four as the average age of the whole of that old stock, all past child-bearing, and who must naturally die off before a fair estimate can be made.

If you advance, as your proposition, that Negroes do not live to a healthy old age, in consequence of their minimum of food, and maximum of labour—we refer you to the authentic returns

deposited in your Colonial Register Office, in London; whence it is proved that, in point of fact, they live far beyond the average age of man, as calculated by Newton, and to a much better age than you do in England! Add to this account the local diseases of Africa, hereditary in Negro blood; and I think that little, in this particular, remains as proof against us!

You say next, generally, that West-India legislation has done nothing towards adopting the ameliorating measures, (or rather *clauses of bills*,) which you have *penned*. Now, let us divide this charge, and examine it *seriatim*.

## I.

*You require us to consent to your appointing a Protector of Slaves to reside among us.* But we feel indignant (as you would yourselves do) at the imputation conveyed, that our Slaves need such a protector; and we refer you to the 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, and 35th clauses of our Slave Code; showing that ample provision has already been made for their protection by ourselves. We believe, (and you cannot convince us to the contrary,) that it is not so much a Protector of the Blacks, as a Destroyer of the Whites, that you design to send among us! We already know, and have deeply felt, how far legal persecution can extend, and to what purpose the ex-



pense of law proceedings may be applied : and when we see the proposed creation of an officer from England, commissioned solely to prosecute, and never to defend, we tremble with apprehension. Embarrass the owner's title to his slave with all the difficulties and persecutions which such an officer might impose, (and which, to justify his appointment, and to recommend himself to his employers, it will be his interest to do,) and you will, indeed, not only have rendered Slave property valueless, but have made it the destruction of its possessor ! Even at present, no prudent proprietor will undertake to manage his own property, in consequence of the snares that are laid around him ; and if, in the sequel of your proceedings, you leave any but the very meanest of Europeans to expose themselves to the torture of so diabolical a system, the Negroes themselves will be fortunate. Theoretical in all your views, and profoundly ignorant of facts, and of the necessary operation of your schemes, the honest part of you would have the misfortune, and the dishonest part the guilt, of aggravating, or rather of creating evils, by the success of what you propose for their removal !

Strange as it may perhaps appear, I do not hesitate to advance, that in the West Indies the Whites, and not the Blacks, need *protection*. No man, at the present time, in the situation of overseer on an estate, can conscientiously do his duty



towards its proprietor, without subjecting himself to risks, of which, had he entertained the slightest conception, he never would have quitted Europe to take upon himself the fearful task! However flagitious the conduct of a Negro may be, the overseer is now afraid to punish, lest the use of inflammatory vegetable juices should be resorted to, for the immediate purpose of creating a sore, and thereby blasting the character, and throwing out of employment for ever, the unfortunate superintendant! I anticipate your almost pardonable disbelief, that any Negro could thus afflict the flesh of his own body; but, I ask you to go to Jamaica, and witness for yourselves the numbers who have created sores, merely that (as they term it) they may *sit down* from all labour! Can you, then, after further knowing that a Negro is *never* punished for these practices, but, on the other hand, is certain of his freedom, and of a maintenance for life, at the expense of his former owner, if his stratagem succeeds;—can you doubt the frequency of the attempt! And it is to acts like these that popular clamour, and meetings and exertions of the most mistaken sanctity and humanity, are affording hourly encouragement and aid!

Nor is this the limit of the calamities heaped upon the White man in Jamaica, by his kinsmen and fellow-subjects at home: the English public has heard too little of horrid and habitual

*poisonings.* But to relate a case or two, may be the best method of illustrating the existence and frequency of the deed.

To commence with one of combination:—The writer of these pages has seen the Negroes of an estate come up in a body to their *attorney* (or manager), for the purpose of endeavouring to get their overseer discharged; and he will here repeat the dialogue which took place upon the occasion. It may be necessary to premise that, upon every estate, the aged Slaves, (men and women,) and women who have young children, are virtually exempt from punishment.

*Attorney to the Overseer.*—You see, Mr. —, that all the Negroes of the estate are dissatisfied.

*Overseer.*—Yes, sir; but be pleased to ask them of what it is they complain; for I am not aware of any severity, beyond requiring them to turn out to their work at a proper hour in the morning, and—

*The old people, and women with young children, all drowning the voice of the Overseer.*—Busha! you is a bad man. You is a worthless buckra. Massa! no believe him; him lie!

*Attorney, to the whole body of Negroes.*—It is my duty, acting, as I am, for your master in England, to tell you, that if you offer this insult to the person who is put over you, I shall myself punish you upon the spot. Let me know of what it is that you complain.

*The whole.*—Massa, we da dead ;—bush da kill we ;—him punish we to pieces ;—him cut we up !

*Attorney.*—Bring forward the person who has been so flogged.

A savage-looking native African here stepped up, showing the marks of a flogging which certainly seemed to have been severe, and which carried all the appearance of having been inflicted on the preceding day.

*Attorney to the Overseer.*—What was this man's fault, Mr. ——— ? and how was he punished ?

*Overseer.*—Sir, this man was guilty of open rebellion. I did not punish him, but preferred charges against him before the magistrates. The punishment which he got was inflicted by their order, *three weeks since*, and was not, even at the time, severe. The state in which you now see his back, has been purposely rendered so by himself.

*The Man.*—Then what make you no flog me with *whip*, like them t'other Negro ?—so, you take *cat*, and flog me 'pon me back, for cut out my heart-tring.

*Attorney, to the Negro.*—Why, this is only the punishment which White people get ; and, I can tell you, a White man would consider himself fortunate, had he got no worse for such a crime. Understand me, all of you, that *I* overlook nothing. If you get into trouble, stand to it ;—the choice is before you. Let me see, now, the next case of severe punishment.

(A general bustle among the Negroes.—“ Da you?” “da you?”—they inquire among one another. At last, a girl is brought forward.)

*Overseer.*—Sir, I never punished her.

*The Children's Mothers.*—No! see here, massa! (pointing to a wale across the back of the girl's neck.)

*Overseer.*—I happen to know, that in playing with a Negro-boy, yesterday, she got that wale by chance, from the blow of a switch.

*Attorney, to the Negroes.*—Out upon you!—shame! The laws, which were intended for your protection, are converted to this infamous purpose! The children-mothers, and old people among you, are put forward as the leaders of this conspiracy, knowing that they are protected! Shame, shame upon you!

(Here the man who had been punished, exclaimed, “Then this da all the satisfaction me get!”)

*Attorney, to the Overseer.*—When did you last flog a Negro upon this estate?

*Overseer.*—Not, sir, for eight months.

Mark you, reader! that, if necessary, you can be instantly furnished with all the names pertaining to the foregoing narrative. The Overseer is a respectable man, who received a good and classical education in Ireland, his native country. There were three hundred Negroes upon the estate. Nor is this an insulated case. Ask any man who is *really* acquainted with Jamaica, and he will tell you of similar ones, occurring daily.



I will add a more simple instance, with respect to which there was no combination ; and in both of these, be it remembered, a Protector of Slaves would have had it in his power—nay, it would have been his duty—to put the Owners upon their trial. We have already magistrates among ourselves, who declare that the charge of the Slave need only be *ex parte*, to justify the prosecution of the Owner.\*

The writer has seen a Negro-woman come up to the Proprietor of an estate, and exclaim, “ Massa, me da ’tarve! Busha won’t help me.”

*Proprietor, to the Overseer.*—Mr. —, if she be in want, why not afford her the usual assistance from the stores?

*Overseer.*—Sir, I believe her provision grounds are in tolerable order. Her son and herself work them. But, as she complained, I offered to assist her, if she would but attend in the mill-yard, to see it swept up by the young children.

*Proprietor.*—What! is this able woman doing no manner of work?

*Woman.*—Me no da go do noting. See all de children me have!

*Proprietor.*—Name them.

*Woman.*—Tom—

*Overseer.*—Long dead.

*Woman.*—Clarissa and him five children, and Quashie, and Tony—

*Overseer.*—Tony dead.

\* Mr. Dallas, in the case of the Custos of Port-Royal.



*Proprietor.*—My good woman, I cannot put up with this. Your son Quashie helps you to work your grounds. Your daughter Clarissa gets an extra day in the week, in consequence of her having five children. As soon as she has six, she will be exempt from all manner of labour; yet I shall be compelled to continue to feed, clothe, and take care of her. Her husband (whether he belong to me, or not) has the choice of my best provision grounds. I have built her a house. Her children get regular allowances from me, of sugar, and rice or flour. Clarissa herself gets a weekly allowance, either of Scotch herrings or Newfoundland fish, not only for herself, but for each of her children. I clothe, feed, and take care of all of them; nay, provide the children with nurses, which last, with similar allowances, have no other work but their nursing to attend to. I employ the best medical men that England can send out; and, in cases of sickness, stint nothing which those gentlemen order. Then, again, the whole of these advantages are bestowed equally upon your old mother, who, for years, has not been required to perform one iota of labour. She, also, has a separate home provided for her by myself; nay, there are others of your family, equally living upon me. It is, indeed, rather too much, that I should have no more than Quashie to work for me, in return for the whole of this! You must do what your overseer bids you.

*Woman.*—Me no da go do noting; and if me

go sit down da gate, dem t'other buckra will say,  
No see Mr. — make him Negro 'tarve!

*Proprietor, to the Overseer.*—Stop her weekly supply of herrings, and give her no additional assistance until she does as you direct.

In the latter instance, the writer of this article was the proprietor; and, in that preceding, he was the attorney or manager.

But, next, as to the *poisonings*. The overseer of an estate in the parish of Hanover, was ordered by the proprietor to remove an able Negro-man from the care of a very small garden, and place him at the usual field-work, and to send a weakly person to the garden in his stead, where the trifling exertions of the feebler man were quite sufficient. The order was obeyed, and the overseer, immediately afterwards, was poisoned. He lingered eight months in bed, lost the use of every limb, and partially his reason. Although at present able to walk about a little, the unfortunate man must remain a pitiable object for life.

It is said that the old African Negroes (usually called Obeah men) can temper their poisons to any degree of certainty, or prolongation in its effects. They are generally vegetable; but the herbs which they thus use remain secrets among themselves, secured by oaths superstitiously administered, while the party swearing drinks a mixture of grave-dirt and human blood; and these oaths are believed never to have been violated.

It is said that the myal weed is a component in most of their poisonous preparations ; this is a species of grass, with a prickly button-head, and very offensive odour, more or less common in Jamaica. I have also heard that some of their poisons are made from the expressed juice of the bitter cassada, which, being allowed to stagnate, breeds a worm : this dried, and reduced to powder, is said to be so very subtile, that a Negro, wearing a long thumb-nail, and secreting the powder beneath it, can dispatch the individual against whom he bears malice, by only dipping the end of his thumb into the cup of liquor which he may be presenting.

I state it as my sincere and positive belief, that a very great proportion of the White people who, at the present day, die on the estates in Jamaica, perish by *poison*, administered by Negro hands. The art of poisoning is an habitual trade with them ; while, at the same time, the superstitious rites accompanying the deed, of which I have partly taken notice, and which appall their feelings and seal their tongues, prevent discovery. Their poison-powders are sold among themselves with perfect impunity. Few are the better-informed *free* Negroes and persons of colour, whose hair does not stand on end when speaking of Obeah ! In Kingston, Old Da Costa was notorious ; yet against him no legal proof could ever be brought. In Spanish Town, suffice it to say, that in one instance a man (not a slave, but considered a respectable Black person,) destroyed himself when

committed to gaol upon evidence of Obeah practices ; and that there is still believed to be an old man, of similar character, at an adjacent pen. The Negroes say that he keeps two large yellow snakes, trained, under his bed ; and pretend that the saliva of a snake in licking the bare body, is one of the most certain charms—always accompanied, however, with powders, to be administered internally to the devoted object. The *making a pot dance*, and other similar orgies, are the deceptions with which they cloak their poisons, and induce those Negroes, not tutored in their arts, to believe that the danger lies rather in the rite than in the actual poison which they administer.

The general mass of Negroes suffer equally with White people ; and in all cases, with women, sterility is produced at pleasure. The herb said to be used on these last occasions, is called “ five-finger.”

You may, any where in Jamaica, (though probably not so generally as formerly,) see an able Negro-man, pining and dying away, with an indescribable supernatural horror hanging over him ; but perfectly unable—insensible, as it were, to the power of making a disclosure, further than that he believes himself to be *obeah'd*. He resigns himself, without a complaint, the willing victim to death.

Take him into your own house, give him your own food, and be at the expense of wines which you cannot afford for yourself,—he will thank you, but tell you that it is useless. To be chris-



tened was once considered a sort of counter-charm to this influence. Among all the baneful effects of mistaken bigotry, this is the good which I can attach to their labours,—they may probably, better than the law, have reduced the number of poisonings.

If two Negroes quarrel, the one replies to the other, “Will you do me bad?—will you have me *obeah’d*?” Cases are too notorious to require further elucidation; nor is it the object of this sketch to write a treatise upon the subject.

The reader, with a burst of feeling, naturally asks, why a state of things so frightful remains unaltered? We answer, because the English Government give it encouragement!

A Negro, in one of the windward parishes, had been sentenced, under the laws of the island, to undergo the punishment of death; and, after sentence, had made confession of a catalogue of the most horrid murders by poison, committed partly upon White people, but, for the greater number, upon his fellow-slaves. Our Governor, in the exercise of His Majesty’s prerogative of mercy, commuted the sentence to transportation; after which, no immediate opportunity of a passage having offered, His Majesty’s ministers sent out for this man an unconditional pardon, and the reward of his absolute freedom; thus encouraging, and even applauding his crimes, and setting him loose to continue their practice upon an outraged and suffering community!

I recollect too the case of a young man, just



arrived from England, and who was placed as a book-keeper upon Tulloch estate, in the parish of St. Thomas in the Vale; his case was particularly cruel,—his name, William Wells. He has a brother, now living in London, who witnessed his death. But I am weary of this recapitulation of horrors; otherwise I might instance Mr. George Reid, Ewen Cameron, Thomas Spicer, &c. &c.

As to the encouragement and invitation to crime in the West Indies, by the English Parliament and people,—who can question it, when we take what we have just read, along with the inflammatory, calumnious, and sanguinary speeches and writings delivered and published in England, in Parliament, at elections for Parliament, to secure the votes of simple and deluded fanatics and enthusiasts—deluded both as to the statements made, and as to the motives of the majority of those who make them;—speeches and writings, delivered and published also in England, at metropolitan and provincial public meetings, “crowded with elegantly dressed females,” who, as well as the less elegantly dressed males, know nothing of the subject presented to them; but whose feelings are to be practised upon, and whose pockets are to be picked, and the whole of whose attendance, and a part of whose money, are to be employed in promoting every bad feeling of the Slaves—in robbing them of the contented mind—in lessening their enjoyments—in creating enmity between master and servant—and in promoting

the murder, perhaps, of the very kinsmen of the infatuated crowd ;—speeches and writings, let it be still subjoined, reported and published in daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly periodicals—in low religious publications, and in equally low political,—and sent across the sea, to be read by or to the Slaves, to fix the scowl upon their brow, and to awake and challenge fury in their hearts !

Peace-offering of love !—amiable co-operation of one honest British subject with another !—Religious duty !—benevolence to the African Slave !—and, more than all this—lucre of gain, and stepping-stone to power ! Little, indeed, do the innocent part of the conspirators in the unholy traffic know what they are about ! Little do they think of the misery they are creating, and the murders they are abetting ! Foul and ferocious words cannot be used for ever, without occasioning, in some shape or other, foul and ferocious deeds.

## II.

### *The Abolition of Sunday Markets.*

WE refer to the sixth clause of our Slave Code, to show that provision has been made for closing the markets at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and to prevent the sale of even the most

absolute necessities of life, during the time appointed for the celebration of divine service.

We declare that this Act of our Assembly is rigidly enforced ; but that, in many instances, it has produced a spirit of discontent among our Slaves, nearly approaching to that of rebellion.

The greater part of the Negroes are unable to satisfy their minds, that it is reasonable for them to be made to give up "their own time," as they term it, for the purpose of sitting down for two hours in a church, listening to a discourse, of which they do not understand a syllable. Many of their number view such a restriction as a severe punishment. In fact, such as are religiously disposed, generally choose their church for the music and singing. It is this closer attention to the musical part of religious service, which accounts for the peculiar success of dissenting missionaries. As to any feeling, applicable to the import of the Sabbath, a Negro understands no more of it than did your own Paley, or your present Archbishop of Dublin.

He feels that, in going to market, he performs no act of labour for a master. All that he carries is his own ; and, in truth, the market-day is his holiday—his fête-day ; and the market his scene of peculiar and most cherished enjoyment. He goes gaily dressed ; and, were you to meet him upon the road, five miles short of his destination, and wish to purchase his commodities, he may consent to sell you a part ; but, as to the whole,

you would not get it from him, even at a double price; and families, residing at that and other distances from the market, are under the constant necessity of sending thither, to purchase necessities at that spot, for *less money* than they have offered, and would willingly have given, to the owner, as he passed their respective doors! It is not simply the money that he is to receive at the market, but the pleasures of the place, and of the time, of which he is in pursuit. The weekly delight of mixing together in such large assemblages, to show off their different productions, and also their finery in dress, is to them a luxury, which, unseen in England, cannot be understood; and, to compel such a people to relinquish enjoyment, and exchange it for the sedate duties of an English Sabbath, has occasioned difficulties to the Colonists, which, though the measure is effected only to a degree, ought to procure them sympathy, and *credit* for their determination and perseverance, rather than *censure* for what yet remains to be performed. Measures are even now in progress, such as the people of England are always resolved not to give credit to, for increasing the religious improvement of the Slaves. For example, on many estates, *book-keepers* are allowed extra salaries, in recompense for their teaching the Negro-children their Catechism.

It is said (and with a degree of truth) that if you take from the Negro his accustomed weekly enjoyments in the *fair* which is held on the Sun-



day, he will expect, and ought to be allowed, another day for it, in return. But we have explanations to give, upon that subject, of a nature to show that it is not in our power to make that offer. The estates in the British West Indies suffer, already, from distresses and difficulties under which none of the Colonies of other countries labour. The Colonies of all Foreign Powers have still their importations of fresh sets of labourers from Africa, principally able-bodied men; while, in the British West Indies, there is no more than an average of thirty in a hundred to do the work, the rest being either old people or young children (the former, as before remarked, the remnant of the ancient importations, and of which the latest having been imported at an average age of thirty, twenty-four years ago, are now fifty-four). Nevertheless, the whole of this greater than two-thirds of our Slave-population, though performing no labour whatever, are by us fed, and, by the obligations of our laws, clothed, and in all respects provided for, even to the utmost medical attention, and consequent prolonging of life. *This, by the way, is British West-India Slavery.* And you will not allow us, as *your* dependants, to challenge the world, to prove that the Slaves in Foreign Colonies—those very Slaves that are themselves performing labour—are treated as well as ours, even when unable to do any thing for us! More than this, do you not, at this very moment, *encourage* importations of



able-bodied Slaves into Foreign Sugar Colonies? In what manner do you believe your bounty upon capture operates, when rich Slave-prizes are taken by your men-of-war? For instance, you require them to be apprenticed for a term of years—suppose at Havannah;—to be taught what? Why, neither more nor less than the *Art of Slavery*; and what security have you for their not being continued, as they are, Slaves for ever after?

But, as to the Sunday markets, and the appropriation of another day for market, it will be seen already that the whole affair is chiefly a matter of amusement and pleasurable relaxation to the Negro;—and hence, perhaps, no heavy accusation ought to fall upon us, if we do not admit it to be matter of absolute *necessity* that *any* day should be appointed for Negroes' travelling eight or ten miles from their homes, to congregate in places which they have themselves chosen; for we say, that a market, answering all the purposes requisite for themselves, might almost be held at home, upon every single estate. It ought not to be forgotten, that the master of the estate supplies his Negroes with a weekly allowance of that kind of animal food (fish) which they most esteem; that they have at home abundance of rich vegetables and fruits (while there *are* people, by the bye, compelled to subsist almost solely upon potatoes); and that they have not even their necessary clothing, nor even its most insignificant or less expensive materials or appliances—threads, needles,

&c.—to purchase;—the whole being imported from England by their owners, and served out to them.—As for luxuries, if they wish for them, towns are near, as well as small shops, in every neighbourhood;—nay more, an immense number of the free Black and Coloured population go about the country, as hucksters or pedlars, to retail any thing for which they can find customers, receiving, in many instances, in exchange, vegetables and fruits. But, all these things notwithstanding, I do not believe that Jamaica, at the present time, would hesitate to bestow upon the Negroes, by a legislative enactment, *every* Saturday, except during the period of *crop*. In point of fact, this, already, is the *practice*; yet, if it were now made matter of *law*, the sectarian preachers would declare to the Negroes, that *they* (the preachers), and their friends across the water, accomplished the good purpose, despite of their tyrannical masters! And have not the Legislatures of the Colonies a right to complain of the exhibition of such a feeling, and of the proceedings by which it is attended?

At present our Consolidated Slave Code, in its stage of progressive improvement, provides, by its eighth clause, that, besides Sunday, *one day* in every fortnight, except during crop, shall be allowed to Negroes, to cultivate their provision-grounds; such days (generally Saturdays) being at the least twenty-six in number during the year.

Those who know what a Sugar estate is, must be aware, that to take *two* days from the week during *crop*, would be nearly equal to the sacrifice of *three*. The mill must always be some hours “put about,” before a sufficiency of liquor can be got into the Boiling-house “to call fire,” and then again, at the conclusion of the week, must be some hours previously stopped, so as to “boil off” in time. A greater consideration, too, remains; namely, that with the allowance of two days, we should have no canes to “put about” with. At present, we leave a sufficiency for the *Monday* morning, from the *Saturday* evening previous; while, if left from the *Friday* evening, they would taint, and no longer make sugar. To wait, on the *Monday* morning, till the canes could be cut in the field, and carted to the Works, would be to sacrifice another day. Ask, indeed, any Negro himself, and he will tell you, that it would be impossible to take off a crop in such a way.

Allowing that Negro-grounds are neglected during crop, yet we never hear of an estate being in want of food during that season. In point of fact, the Negroes consume, and clandestinely barter away, or sell, a very large proportion of the produce of every estate. No limit, during crop, is put to their use of the cane itself, provided it is taken only for the purpose of their own eating: the Colonists “muzzle not the mouth of the ox that grindeth out the corn.” But the Negroes, in point of fact, notoriously steal the canes, to sell

and barter away, and that even at periods *out of crop*, when, if not checked, they would destroy the whole produce of the coming season. Let any individual ascend, during the crop season, a rising ground in Jamaica, and look down among the Negro houses of an estate, (when the people are away at work, and there can be no cooking,) and he will see innumerable columns of smoke arising from different houses; should he then descend and enter them, (a thing, by the way, *which the whole estate would rebel at!*) he would find the old and infirm within them, boiling into sugar, in common pots, the syrup which they have got the young children to bring them. During crop, every Negro is allowed, twice a day, from the Boiling-house, a supply of syrup from the third copper. There is a calabash, with a stick through it, as a ladle, (and which holds about a quart,) hung up close by, and the Negroes help themselves with it, as a matter of course; sometimes, indeed, (and especially near towns, where it is liable to be taken for the direct purpose of sale, instead of consumption,) children are limited to the allowance of a smaller measure. The youngest book-keeper, or one last taken into employ, usually attends at the Boiling-house throughout the day; and, as he knows few or none of the Negroes, they commonly help themselves *five* or *six* times, instead of twice, to "hot liquor," as they term the syrup. There must be added to all this, innumerable other thefts, which so small a proportion of White people are inadequate to guard against. No



Negro will tell against another; nay, he will calmly reason with you to prove that he has himself the right to steal from his owner, although he will not permit a stranger to do the same. Give him a feed of corn for your horse, he will steal the greater part for his own fowls; and then modestly ask you to resolve the question—whether, if the horse belong to you, he does not belong to you also?

The Negroes, therefore, during crop, are all sleek and healthy, even though their provision grounds are then neglected; everything, in short, upon the estate, looks fat, except the unfortunate working-cattle, whom they superintend. If we want to fatten a horse quickly, we give him a little molasses with his corn, which both fattens him, and makes his coat shine. Pigs, poultry, dogs, rats—everything thrives upon sugar;—neither does it injure the teeth of the Negroes, who proverbially have such fine ones: nevertheless, there are medical men here who profess to teach that sugar, though confessedly wholesome, contains nothing nutritive; and that all which can be said in its favour, is, that it is palatable, and therefore induces us to eat more of the things which it accompanies!

Be not deceived, good people of England! Take the word of a planter, who judges not from theory, nor from chemical analysis, but from fact, that sugar, more especially for old age and infancy, is as wholesome and as nutritive a



thing as the stomach can receive; and it would therefore be no more than wise in you, loudly to call upon your Government to render it, by the reduction of a heavy duty, a necessary within your reach, and not a luxury beyond it! Look at the immense quantity of sugar consumed in the United States, even in the form of molasses!

And why should any of you refuse to taste sugar, because it is cultivated by British West-India Slaves? Have we not challenged the world to show that in any Colony whatever slaves are as well treated as in those of the British? Have not the United States five times as many as those in the West Indies? are they equal to yours in their comforts and protection?—and do the Americans deny themselves the use of any article, because produced by their industry? Consider well, I beseech you! Are you not, at this very moment, clothed in American cotton? yet, by whom is that cotton grown, picked, and packed?

Do not many of the Indian tribes possess African Slaves? Are not those Indians held more inferior to the American Whites, than our Slaves in the West Indies are to us? And can you imagine that Slaves, in a secondary degree of degradation, (still preferable probably to their original state in Africa,) are to be compared with the Slaves in your own old, improved West-India Islands? Why not call for inquiry upon that subject, if you have doubts, and make unprejudiced comparisons? Why not

compare the Slave of the United States (nay, as I have said, of the whole world) with the British Slave in the West Indies, instead of comparing the latter with the people of England? You will find, indeed, that to amalgamate the two—the Negro and the Briton,—you must make the latter first descend, and meet the African half way, in semi-barbarism.

But, as to the comparative *protection* of Slaves, *three planters*, I believe, in the United States, form an union of both Judges and Jury to convict. Is there any thing similar to that, in the British West Indies, where a Slave has all the rights and liberties which your own British laws bestow upon him, and no trial without a Jury?

Can either cotton or sugar, the produce of a tropical sun, be cultivated by White people? If they could, would not the Southern parts of the United States imitate the example of the Northern, *by trying to wheedle every Negro far away from their territories?*

No doubt, improvements might still be made in our Slave Code; for nothing in the world is perfect. One might readily suggest, that the *twenty-six* days in the year should be made, *by law*, specifically *Saturdays*, (which, *in practice*, they already are); and that the Overseer should not have it left to his option to give or withhold what day he pleased, provided he made up the *twenty-six*, *which he is obliged to swear to*, in the year. At present, should a shower of rain fall over-

night, the Overseer has it in his power—nay, in many instances, considers it his duty to his employer—to withhold the regular alternate Saturday; requiring the Negroes to turn out, and plant the canes or corn which have been lying over for want of rain. But, although it might even appear reasonable, that every sacrifice should be made for the sacred object of planting, under such circumstances, the first staple of the estate, still a chance, coming, as it does, from Heaven, ought equally to belong to either party, as it may fall. In fact, more discontent prevails, at present, upon estates, in relation to that point, than to any other; and Overseers would be glad of a direct rule from the law, saving them alike from a charge of neglect, and from the murmurs of those whom they are appointed to superintend. I would also no longer leave the hours of relaxation and dinner, at mid-day, to the chance of the correctness of an Overseer's watch; but require (what I am about to practise upon my own estates) the fixing up of a large clock, of the nature of a town-clock, to be observed with regularity in the distribution of time. Matters like these may appear trivial; but let me be believed, that the real comforts of the Negroes depend more upon these practical observances, than upon complicated theoretical laws. A body of Slaves ought not to be managed by means of a subtle and technical system, such as is sometimes misunderstood by the most learned of the Judges among yourselves;

but some smaller sacrifices (if such they can be termed) ought to be made, for the purpose of securing a more practical Code, better suited to the purposes of any organized body—as, for instance, your navy and your army.

Upon many Pens (or grazing farms) and mountain settlements, near towns, (particularly Kingston and Spanish-town), the Negroes prefer working on from breakfast-time till four o'clock ; after which they have the rest of the day (always a summer one with us) wholly to themselves,—added to which, in many instances, *every* Saturday, in place of alternate ones, throughout the year. Of course, every proprietor can relinquish what proportion of the labour of his Slaves he pleases, although restricted by the law from imposing upon them ; and while these larger concessions are impracticable upon *Sugar estates*, they may readily be made upon other properties. A Negro of my own, in a situation of that kind, without trespassing upon any of the hours of labour which were my due, brought into cultivation for himself, in the space of two years, a provision-ground of about eight acres, for which he was offered, by a gentleman of my acquaintance, one hundred pounds currency. I recommended him to take the money, and to give it to me for his freedom ; offering, at the time, to execute a title to the land for the purchaser, and to allow double the extent of equally good land adjoining,—nay, a choice over eight hundred acres—for a new



ground for himself, together with an absolute title to him as a freeman, instead of his cultivating it, as he had previously done the eight acres, as my property ;—but all this was refused ; and I have heard the individual say, that he made a doubloon (five pounds six shillings and eightpence currency) a week, by sales from the ground in question.

There is nothing wonderful in this statement. Many are the cases of a still more advantageous nature. It is only to be regretted that such instances of praiseworthy industry are not general.

### III.

*That no Slave shall be worked or employed at any time between the time of Sunset on any Saturday, and Sun-rise on any Monday.*

In Jamaica, where the days and nights are nearly equal throughout the year, and where, in mountainous situations, the sun may not happen to show itself over a hill at any particular hour which a British Ministry may be pleased to appoint—for the satisfaction of the Slaves themselves, we prefer reckoning by *hours* ; and we refer to the tenth clause of our Slave Code to show that we have adopted this regulation.



## IV.

1. *Every Whip, Cat, or other instrument of like nature, as emblems of authority, to be disused.*
2. *Punishment of Male Slaves limited to Twenty-five Lashes.*
3. *No punishment of Female Slaves by flogging ; yet effectual means to be taken for their correction.*
4. *A Plantation Book for recording all Punishments.*

First, as regards the whip generally. The good people of England, indeed, have suffered themselves to be deceived by pictures of “blood streaming,” and the dreadful, terrible cart-whip.” That there are cart-whips, and even plenty of them, in Jamaica, is beyond a doubt ; but that Negroes are ever punished with them, is a falsehood ! Let me explain :—The cart-whip is an amazingly large whip, with a very long handle (such as you see it represented in the print-shops) ; and it is constructed by the Negroes for driving cattle attached to waggons loaded with sugar. Usually, from twelve to fourteen steers are yoked in pairs, and draw in a line. To reach six or seven pair forward, from the body of the waggon, where the driver stands, requires a whip of the length and size described ; and hence the origin and the sole use of the Jamaica Cart Whip !

That a Whip is used with the Negroes, when necessity demands it, is true; and also that the Overseer is the person authorised to judge of the necessity. It would appear better that the power of inflicting this corporal punishment should be under closer restraint,—rather than be left to the single judgment of an individual, who, in some instances, may not possess, in an equal degree, the desire to enforce proper order and discipline, with those feelings of compassion *for many excesses in which it might be unreasonable to make allowances for an equal*. No set of men can be perfect; and laws ought to guard against what *may* be done, rather than trust to what *will* be. I am sure, also, that it would be an advantage to every Overseer, could he procure, upon making a complaint, a Negro to be punished by *proper* authority, instead of labouring under the disagreeable necessity (for such it is to him) of ordering and superintending that punishment himself. But, let the friends of the Negroes rest distinctly assured, that under such a provision, if properly regulated, more severe punishments would occur, than are at present inflicted. The chief difficulty, however, would consist in finding *proper* authorities for the purpose. Magistrates, among ourselves, cannot neglect their own occupations, to devote themselves to what is only the more immediate concern of others; and if we leave it to our Censors in England—to Magistrates of their choice,—we shall have men expressly commissioned, more

to pull down all authority, than to uphold it. Nay, the expense would not be small; for the cases must not be heard for nothing;—the Judges would require to be paid.

You ought to recollect, that punishments are often necessary, not alone for the enforcement of labour, but to correct vices and abuses practised by the Slaves among themselves, to the injury of each other. Surely you are not prepared to believe, that it is only Black men who are exempt from all human frailties and evil passions, and stand in need of no correction nor control!

But the abolishing of the Whip as an emblem of authority, would merely superinduce the necessity for supplying some other emblem (as, for example, a dress) to take its place. At present, a Driver (a Negro) wears it slung over his shoulder, as a White person might wear a scarf or a Highland belt; and, so far from a Whip being any article of terror, every Negro child, as soon as he can crawl, makes it his chief toy. You see them, at all times, smacking whips for their amusement. There are occasions upon which the Negroes (Drivers) use them, without any reference to punishment. For example,—in making a noise, by cracking them, to arrest the attention of the labourers, while they repeat the orders just received from the Overseer, for the work of the succeeding day;—to rouse, by a similar noise, the Negroes, in the morning, when

turning out to their work ;—to draw up the whole together when breakfast is prepared ;—to let them rise, or “ budge,” when the time for breakfast has elapsed ;—to dismiss them from work in the evening, &c. &c. The substitution of another instrument or emblem for all these purposes would do us no kind of injury ;—we only think it strange that you should wish us to abrogate an old custom, and a simple contrivance of such very various utility, without pointing out the substitute which you could wish !

Some year or two ago, I heard of an instance of the attempt to abolish the *Whip* and *Cat* upon a property in Jamaica ; and the history of the affair fell out as follows :—(In relating it, however, I do not pledge myself for its accuracy :) An Overseer applied to his employer, to know by what means he was to preserve order upon the property, because he understood that the British Government were about to abolish the use of the *Whip*, *Cat*, and every other instrument of a similar nature ? His employer (an attorney or manager) being unable to give him any advice, he was left to his own invention. A Negro had committed a heinous fault ; and, instead of allowing him to stand up, in the usual way, unheld and uncovered, to receive a few licks of the Driver’s whip, the Overseer, with a great deal of formality and affected determination of purpose, ordered him to be held by four other men, and the Driver, instantly, and at his peril, to bring



a feather! The culprit was then *tickled*, instead of being flogged; upon which he bellowed most unmercifully, (which is what he would never have done, if punished with the Whip); and, immediately after the *infliction*, the whole body of Negroes left the property, to complain of an Overseer, who, by so barbarous an act, had given occasion to all the other Negroes in the parish, to call those of that particular property by the opprobrious name of "Tickle Feathers!"

In another case, within my knowledge, a Negro was told that the British Government, instead of suffering them to be *flogged* for theft, intended to have them *hanged*; and, as you may well imagine, no small consternation was manifested at the news!

2. *TWENTY-FIVE lashes limited to a Male Slave.*—We refer to the thirty-third and thirty-fourth clauses of our Slave Code, to show that no more than *ten* lashes are at present permitted upon an estate, unless under restrictions; and that no more than *twenty* can be inflicted in any gaol or workhouse, unless under the warrant of a justice of the peace. Safely, therefore, may we say, that we have acted up to the full spirit of this demand; and yet I have heard that a number of chains have been collected by a gentleman of colour, (the captain of a ship trading to Port Maria, in Jamaica,) for the purpose of putting them into the hands of a member of the House of



Commons, who has got up a part for a debate, in the course of which, in imitation of the celebrated *scene* of Burke, he is to throw them, with a burst of passion and philanthropic appeal, upon the floor of that Honourable House!

Negroes confined in the *workhouses* of Jamaica are, as it ought to be understood, so many *convicts* undergoing punishment; and it is therefore that, to prevent them from absconding, when out upon the public roads at work, they are linked together in pairs, by means of short and light chains; but that chains, under any other circumstances, are ever put upon Negroes in Jamaica, is wholly untrue. Not many months since, being in the town of Port Maria, I saw the Workhouse Driver following the Negroes to their work. He carried with him, not a Whip, but a *Cat*, the particular structure of which I will describe. It consisted in a stick of light white-pine wood, about eighteen inches long, and as thick as a man's thumb, with *three* (not nine) tails attached to it;—the tails not made of hard whip-cord, knotted, such as a sailor's *cat* is, but of the precise description of cord with which a bundle of quills is bound together. I left three shillings and fourpence with the person of the house at which I lodged, to purchase the *cat* from the Driver upon his return from work; and it was my intention to present it to Mr. Buxton; but I have not yet received it.

In Kingston, I have seen the Black Driver

of a workhouse, instead of enforcing labour, twirling an umbrella over his head, while the convicts were standing in the street, eating rich viands that were presented to them; all as if in ridicule of the idea that those prisoners were exposed to any degree of hardship or privation.

You object to *Drivers* among the Negroes;—but have I not, within a few days past, seen a man superintending several others who were sweeping a London street! Give this man any other name that you please, his occupation is still the same—namely, that of a *Driver*. There has been a time when, as it is said, barbarities were committed against the Negroes in Jamaica; and it is probable that the planters of those days justified themselves upon the plea of the necessity of a resort to terrors, to keep in awe a crowd of Africans, then savages. We see that *branding* was then practised; an act performed by means of small letters made of silver, and dipped into lighted spirits;—and there are persons now living, who will tell you, that this was even an act of humanity towards the newly-imported Africans, who, otherwise, wandering away from the estate, could not have made themselves understood, so as to be brought back, but would have been exposed to perish from hunger in the woods. But be the merits of all these things what they may, the time for their existence in Jamaica has been long since past!

I have heard, and I believe the fact can be

demonstrated by irrefragable evidence in Jamaica, that our Arch-Enemy when an Overseer upon Hyde Estate, in the parish of St. Thomas in the Vale, (where I have myself seen his writing and signature in a plantation-book of that estate,) lost many Negroes, by cruelties, but, as was stated by him, in consequence of their being drowned in the Bog-walk River. One Negro in particular, who wore a chain, died; and the body, without any coroner's inquest, or a removal of the chain, nay, having it wrapped around, was buried in an adjacent cane-piece; and, as I have also heard, another Slave, a female, died in the chains with which she was fastened in his kitchen. At a time like this, no man ought to be afraid to stand forward, in plain honest truth, the defender, not alone of himself, but of all his injured friends around him; and Mr. M'Donald, the Overseer of Bybrooke Estate, adjoining Hyde, (under the superintendence of Mr. Malcolm M'Leod, who was once Mr. Macaulay's book-keeper,) will, I dare say, if necessary, assist me in showing, that there are old Negroes upon Hyde at this moment, who can confirm these observations. To name—Ann Taylor, at present house-woman, and Sally Gilbert, fowl-house woman, his concubines; and old Colebrooke, then a tradesman, but now hot-house doctor. The Negroes upon that estate can never bear to hear his name mentioned.—“If an Overseer of the present day were to do one tenth of what was done by Mr. Macaulay in those days,”

observed Mr. M'Donald to me, "he would be hung twenty times over!"

So much for one of our most bitter and relentless enemies, who has left no act nor art of misrepresentation unemployed against us; and whose best apology, perhaps, is, that he speaks of Jamaica as he himself knew it to be, and not as Jamaica is in any way known to more modern times, and to other persons!

But, finally, ask any respectable Negro in Jamaica, whether he would wish the whip to be entirely abolished; and his answer will be to this effect:—"Sir, if you seek to do away with it, first (if not for your own sakes, at least for mine) establish something else to supply its place. If you do not, no order will be preserved, no, not even by me, in my own family!"

3. *No correction of Females by flogging; yet a declaration that effectual means ought to be resorted to for punishment.*—Now, in the first place, and in point of fact, very few of these punishments occur.\* The fear of their infliction, however, keeps the Negroes in order; and this, of course, is all that we desire. But, do you think that, with so small a proportion of White people as we possess, a reasonable discipline could possibly be maintained upon an estate, if all the females (and even

\* It has already been stated that old women, as well as old men, and women having young children, are virtually in practice exempt from punishment.



the children, under your law) were permitted to do with impunity whatsoever they pleased ?

You say, that we must substitute for flogging, confinement in the stocks. But with what security can we undertake to obey you with exactness in this respect ? Have we not seen one of our chief magistrates degraded for the very act of adopting that punishment in preference to flogging ?\*

You tell us plainly what it is you will *not* allow ; but why not tell us, with equal plainness, the extent of your permissions ? Give us a precise plan, with the height, breadth, and depth, and all other particulars, of the “ solitary cell ” which it is your wish we should prepare (for, at present, we have none—our *stocks* being placed in the hot-houses, where the criminal can have free intercourse with all the other Negroes) :—tell us, too, the supply of food, in quantity and quality, to which you propose restriction as another species of punishment ; and the respective periods of time during which females, for specific and enumerated offences, may be kept in durance. Do this, and make the punishments but as heavy as you would think needful for preserving order among White people themselves ; and I for one, who have five hundred Negroes of my own, will wholly abolish the whip, as regarding females, and employ, in its place, your prescribed punishments. Further than this, as regards the male Slaves, I will

\* Mr. Jackson, who has since thrown up his commission as a Major-General of Militia.

employ no other instrument for their correction, than such as you shall cause to be made—shall wholly approve—and shall cause to be marked or sealed at the Colonial Office;—only, I ask, as a preliminary condition, that you will let the punishments which you ordain be equal to such as you would deem necessary for keeping in order White men, placed in the same circumstances as the Blacks.

4. *A Plantation Record Book of Punishments.*—To this I see no objection, provided that it be not converted into an instrument of oppression, in the hands of a protector of your own choosing. We feel, however, so wounded, so slandered, so insulted, by all the general tenor of your language and proceedings, that well may we be pardoned, if, at the moment, we hesitate to adopt a suggestion, the nature of which appears to carry with it a humiliating purpose—that of endeavouring to convict us, out of our own mouths, of an infamy which, quite as much as you can do, we ourselves abhor! Although we live in the West Indies, are we not British subjects as well as yourselves? Have we not been “born and educated” in the same religion, and under the same laws,—nay, on your very shores? Have we not been tutored in the same precepts? have we not enjoyed the same examples? and is it not competent to us, as well as to you, to “glory in the name of Briton,” and in the title to share with

yourselves whatever you, as well as we, may think sacred or ornamental in the British character? Are not our small Assemblies modelled upon your House of Commons? and may we not be permitted to believe that they differ from it in little besides the numbers of their members? There are legislators in the West Indies, who, had they been members of your Parliament, might have successfully and satisfactorily resisted some of your baneful measures. There are Parliamentary orators in the West Indies, whose reported speeches your own leaders have not been too proud to eulogize!\*

## V.

### *Marriages.*

WE refer to the fourth section of our Slave Code, to show that your Instructions, under the head of Negro Marriages, are carried into full effect.

At no better time, perhaps, than the present, could the writer touch upon a subject, which, however delicate, must not, even for the sake of the West Indians themselves, be omitted in these pages.

We have been accused of the grossest sexual licentiousness; and we reply, that your own military—your very Governors from England—until the instance of the Earl of Belmore—have been

\* Mr. Brougham, speaking of “a galaxy of talent.”

the patterns presented to us, of the very sins of which you accuse us! No man of proper feeling will attempt to defend a system of immorality, be it found upon the continent of Europe, or elsewhere; yet still, the Planters of the West Indies may justly consider it imperative upon them to remove, as far as they can, a cruel prejudice of which they have been made so invidiously the victims.

I have been asked in England,\* whether Proprietors, in the West Indies, do not hire out Black females as prostitutes? My answer has been, that in Jamaica (of which island, in every instance, I more particularly speak) there are no White females upon the estates, and that it would be impossible to encourage White marriages there, by sending out half a dozen ship-loads of Irish girls (as was once projected); because in that climate White men die quickly, and would thus leave widows, with helpless children, upon the estates, in a country where there are no poor-rates, and where the already starving Proprietor is without the means, either to support them there, or to send them back to Europe;—that Europe—that England—or that Ireland, too—where, if they did arrive, they would arrive universally destitute, and without a claim to legal provision! Now, if a poor White man fall sick of one of the dreadful fevers of the country (an affliction which he may regularly lay his account to), some one must

\* By a nephew of Mr. Wilberforce.



attend upon him ; the attendant will be a woman ; and, since there are no White women, the woman will be a Black. Let it be confessed, that a feeling of gratitude often supervenes, in the bosom of the sick man, for the cares bestowed upon him amidst his sufferings ; that these feelings of gratitude, in too many instances, are the whole return which an unfortunate Book-keeper can make ; —that thus, an attachment will ensue ; and, removing to another estate, the White man will often entreat the Proprietor, or his Attorney, to let the female accompany him ; to which the answer naturally is, that the female performs a certain part of the work upon the estate, and that, if taken away, some other Slave, or the hire sufficient to procure one, must be found to supply her place.—This, then, is the transaction which you in England, in your justice, and in your charity, call the hiring out of a Black female as a prostitute !

## VI.

### *No Separation of the Members of Families.*

We refer you to the fifth clause of our Slave Code, to show, that we have more than complied with your Instructions in this respect ; for we have affixed no limit to the age of children, in prohibiting that they shall be separated from their parents.

## VII.

*Protection, by legal enactment, of the Rights of Property in the Slaves ; which, it is stated, already exists in usage.*

We refer to the fourteenth and fifteenth clauses of our Slave Code, to show that this Instruction has been fully complied with.

## VIII.

*Savings' Banks.*

If unable, as yet, to accomplish the establishment of these, there is at least no *moral* blame to be attached to us upon that account.

## IX.

*Taxes upon Manumission to be done away.*

This is complied with.

## X.

*Compulsory Manumission.*

This subject, like that of the Whip, remains misunderstood between Great Britain and her

Colonies. Men must be upon the spot, if they would discover the whole circle of its bearings. Those who, for the most part, would have it in their power to manumize themselves, would be *head people*, such as, in nine cases out of ten, have large families; by the effect of the law proposed, they would be empowered, and oftentimes induced, to separate themselves from those families, or, in other words, to desert or forsake them. As to a Negro's paying his money to manumize his child, this is what would seldom happen; because the child performs no labour, and yet is fed, clothed, and altogether taken care of, at the expense of the owner. The same unwillingness to manumize, upon the part of the Negroes themselves, would be apparent with respect to elder branches of families;—nay, it is an instruction of the British Ministry, that if a Slave be under the age of six years, or above that of fifty, the owner, under a penalty of two hundred pounds sterling, shall not manumize, without providing food, clothing, and other maintenance, in the first case until the age of fourteen, and in the second, for the whole remainder of life. Now, these arrangements complied with, many a Negro might at once quit his wife and children, and seek another woman, pretending that he had lost his original marriage paper, and knowing that all he left behind would continue to be provided for by his master!

Besides, if the better informed and better be-

haved Negroes upon an estate were in this manner taken away from it, would not such a precedence lessen the value, the good order, and the productiveness of all the rest, robbed, as they would be, of their example? And again, if the young and able Negroes are to be allowed, separately and exclusively to manumize themselves,—who, in the name of all that is just and right, is to be called upon to feed, clothe, and lodge the aged and the children that remain?

But, in cases where these difficulties do not interfere, and an owner may himself wish to manumize, (yet, possessing only a limited interest, may be legally unable to do so,) the sixty-eighth clause of our Slave Code removes all impediments.

## XI.

*No Owner to manumit gratuitously any Slave under six years of age, nor above fifty, nor labouring under disease; unless he executes to His Majesty a bond, in the penalty of two hundred pounds, conditioned that he shall clothe, feed, and maintain such Slave, until the age of fourteen years in the case of Infants, or during life, or continuance of infirmity, in the case of Adults.*

Any one acquainted with the subject must see, in reality, that, to form a legislative enactment to



to this effect, would be to place a barrier in the way of manumissions. A Negro father, himself free, may wish to manumize his offspring, for whom he may have ample means of provision; yet an owner could not give his consent, without making himself liable to the payment of three hundred and thirty-six pounds *currency*, under a bond to the Crown! People, also, above the age of fifty years may, at the same time, be in possession of ample means of making themselves comfortable for life; but in both such cases as these, the tendency of such an enactment must be to operate as a prohibition!

It might be thought that Mr. Stephen must have fallen into some mistake, as to this part of the “Instructions;” for it cannot but appear unaccountable, that the same Code of Regulations should compel persons to manumize, (without any regard to age,)—“in case any Slave shall be desirous to purchase the freedom of himself, or of his or her wife or husband, or child, or brother, or sister; or reputed wife or husband, or child, or brother, or sister;”—yet deny the owner, or embarrass the right of the owner, to manumize even gratuitously, in cases of good conduct or voluntary choice. But the insulting presumption, here, and in the same character with every thing else regarding West-India Proprietors, derived from their *friends* and fellow-subjects in England, is evidently this, that none would manumit without a base purpose. Refer, however, to the proofs

from Jamaica, which have been furnished you, to show the reverse.

By the seventy-fifth clause of our Slave Code, the Manumission Bond is rendered unnecessary, in cases where the Slave intended to be manumized is presented to the Magistrates and Vestry, and they are satisfied that the manumission is not given for the purpose of relieving the owner from the obligation of maintaining an aged or infirm Slave. See, also, the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 67th clauses; and then say, whether, either our experience, or our humanity (for it is at our own expense,) has not enabled and induced us to make better provisions for your own purposes, than you yourselves have by any chance devised.

## XII.

### *Slave Evidence.*

We refer to the hundred and thirtieth and subsequent clauses of our Slave Code, to show that we have conceded, upon this head, even more than you desired; for we allow Slaves to convict the owners of Slaves, and their own among the rest, of crimes punishable with death—which is more than you direct. It is true that we have adopted restrictions, which our experience upon the spot has suggested to be needful, to guard against false swearing, rather than to place it in

the power of a Slave to commit perjury, for the sake of afterwards punishing him. These are—such as requiring, in cases of capital offence, the clear and consistent testimony of *two* Slaves to the same fact ; and that our own magistracy (not *every public teacher of religion*, as you direct) shall be the judges, whether or not such Slaves sufficiently understand the nature and obligations of an oath.

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Thus much, then, to show that Jamaica has done every thing which she could do, consistent “with the well-being of the Slaves themselves, and a due regard to the rights of private property.”

But, next, can it be said, that the Free Black and Brown people of Jamaica suffer any privations? Are they not our Legislators? Have we not made them eligible to be our Governors?

Will nothing appease you? Is the surrendered spirit of Britons, crushed thus far, no atonement that can move you? Is the utter destruction of our property and our lives your only ultimate object? And, can you wonder that those who inherit the same blood which flows in your veins, should rebel against this tyranny?

I have known a man, who has worked hard enough in Jamaica, declare, with tears in his no longer youthful eyes, that he adored, that he worshipped, his native land ; that his greatest and most dutiful ambition was to support his aged

mother in Scotland ;—yet, that if all he had put together from the sweat of his brow, during so many years, in a baneful climate, were to be wrested from him, and he were to be driven in his own old-age to beggary, under the infamous charge of being inhuman,—“ In that case,” said this individual, “ I would, with my whole heart, in the spirit of Sampson, pray for strength to sacrifice the whole British empire, in common ruin with ourselves !”—a last, an only melancholy hope !

Is there a Colony which does not consider you its oppressor ? Some, more fortunate, have territories at their backs—but not so an island. The following is extracted from one of your own newspapers :—

*East-India Petition.*—“ An arrival from Bombay has brought to England the copy of a document of very great interest, and closely connected with a subject of the highest political importance. It is the petition to the House of Commons of the Christians, Hindoos, Parsees, Mahometans, and Jews, natives of the British possessions in India, on the grievances they suffer under the administration of Government as at present constituted in that part of the world ; the remedy for those grievances ; and the rights and advantages to which they aspire and claim from the humane and prudent consideration of our Legislature. This petition is understood to speak the sentiments of no less than 60,000,000 of human beings, all subjects



of the British empire in India.”—*Times*, June 18, 1831.

But with the loss of the devoted West-India Islands will the arm of oppression fall paralysed! America nourishes, and has already taken from you, your best seamen. I have, within three months past, walked the deck of the Franklin seventy-four, at Brooklyn; and, having worn a button in your navy, I can tell you, that the men who have remained in your service, will never, in the event of a war, be able to cope with those who have in disgust left you. The Savannah, and another frigate there, will teach you, whenever they are launched, your own art of ship-building. Would England, in these days, threaten to blockade New York, against the chances of a calm, and her steamers?

Let me repeat:—Your carrying trade, already gone, never to return, will shortly dry up the sources for a nursery of seamen there.—Newfoundland, America now shares, and can at pleasure take from you. No longer will you have a market for fish, therefore good-bye to that source. The Canadas, with no thanks to you, are so situated, that you are compelled to be a little considerate. But you will no longer require their timbers. Even as it is America can do what she likes with them. And, in the East Indies, you ought to calculate the advantages which an American merchant at this very instant possesses over your own, with all your pretended monopoly. Was not the na-

tional loss during the short American war, when her armed vessels came up your very Channel to destroy your commerce, a sufficient lesson? Do you *guess* how wide the channel is to the East Indies?

*We*, your unfortunate, but hitherto loyal dependents, now driven to madness and desperation, challenge you to show, if you can, any better statement of your actual relations with all who look up to you, resulting from the most cruel, most heartless oppression!

You employed savage Indians to scalp and torture the Americans. Have you given a thought to the extremities to which your instigation of Negro fury against the West Indians may lead? Have you considered what are the probable results of your newspaper reports of speeches delivered in England, urging the Negroes to massacre their supposed oppressors, and marking out the latter as the assured victims of the wrath of heaven? Think you that these papers, in the hands of the Negroes, read by them in large assemblages, are misunderstood? Can your permitting the promulgation of such doctrines be received in any other light than as sanctioning them?

People of England!—are you prepared to meet, in another world, the curses of dependents and relatives put to deaths more horrible than the deepest spells of fiends could invent? Did you ever hear of the excesses of St. Domingo? For in-

stance, a man's being lashed to a board, and sawed in two from head to foot; and another case,—the body of a pregnant White female ripped open—her unborn infant thrown to the hogs—her husband decapitated before her, and his head sewed up in its place!

Yet the greater possibility is, that this deception upon your part will tend to destroy the very persons whom you are leading astray. The free Brown and Black population, who are upon the spot, know the truth, that there is no oppression, and they cordially unite with us. Nay, the better-informed, among the Slaves themselves, are satisfied that the White people of the Colonies are not their tyrants, but their kind friends!

They inquire, and are told, that while their pretended friends in England order that they shall have shoes, especial care is taken not to pay for those shoes themselves!

They know that their unfortunate masters have not the means left to clothe and support their own families; but are daily losing their properties, which are transferred to creditors in another part of the world!

Those better-informed Slaves inquire, and then discover, that they are working solely for the Government of England, their pretended friends, who will not give up one farthing to make them comfortable!

They compare their present situation with their former condition in Africa; and find that, under

the White people, who take the trouble to live among them, they are better taken care of!

They see that, in infancy and old age, a certain provision is made, which never could accompany a state of freedom!

They ask, but cannot perceive, that these pretended friends will supply the place of any such provision; and find, in truth, that these very friends would turn them out of house and home, leaving them to their own shifts—to starve!

They want to know what it really is that they are to gain by freedom; for they are told that, in all situations, free people must work; and they find that sensible Negroes, who go to England, return, declaring how sorry they would be to exchange their own situation for that of the labourer in England!

One misfortune is, that the better-informed Slaves, to whom I have alluded, are but a limited part of the whole number.

You declare that the Colonies occasion an annual loss to the empire; but, pray what prodigy of a financier discovered this problem? Did he estimate, in its solution, the additional revenue acquired through taxes imposed upon all articles consumed in connexion with the Colonies, and all the profits and advantages of trade, nursery for a marine, &c.? Does he include the ruinous expenses of Sierra Leone, got up to suit the purposes of our inveterate enemy, who, while duping



the British Government, has taken especial care to make for himself a princely fortune? Then, again, the sacrifice of a beautiful Dock-yard and Naval Hospital, at Port Royal, Jamaica, (under the recommendation, as it is said, of Admiral Fleming,) and an infamous squander of public money to build others, in the out-of-the-way and dangerous shoals of the Bermudas? Does he also include the enormous bounty given to British men-of-war, for sacrificing our interests in carrying Slaves to Cuba?

Even though you add these and all other useless expenses to the account, think you that the Colonies can be proved to occasion an annual loss to Government? But if, after all, they can be proved to do so, why not cede the Mauritius to France, in exchange for some more advantageous object? That island is more French than English, and will rejoice in the transfer. Give Demerara to Russia or to Austria, Berbice to Belgium, &c. &c.; and be assured, that no Sugar Colony will at present blame you for transferring its allegiance to a foreign power. Other nations, since the peace of 1815, have learned how to value and protect their Colonies. Those who have not Colonies, encourage the importation, into their own ports, of the raw material, and impose a tax, estimated as equal to a prohibition, on anything resembling a manufacture of which themselves are capable. The period is past, when England was permitted to supply all Europe, then deeply engaged in wars with Buonaparte, who left them

little time to act or think. Her commercial glory must set, when compelled to relinquish her trade as the carrier of the world, and to rescind her far-famed monopolizing Navigation Acts!

Let the duties and protection which *France* affords to the productions of her Colonies be compared with ours. We owe the loss of those advantages to the overstrained prudence of Washington. Yet, how readily might not England have been a blessing to her dependents, rather than their unnatural scourge! Instead of attending to the misrepresentations of persons who have been disregarded in the Colonies, (Admiral Fleming, for instance,) and others, whose evident interest it has been to injure them, why not have promoted sufficient and well-directed inquiries? Oh no! say you; we will be satisfied with the fact that there is a decrease of Slaves!

Would Ministers be satisfied with an uniform answer to every proposition of their own, in these words:—"Eight Hundred Millions of National Debt!"

And, after all—your Petitions against Slavery, how are they got up? There are many young men now in Jamaica, who were induced to sign them, prior to their leaving England. Two, in particular, have mentioned circumstances to me which I will repeat. They were followed into a pastry-cook's shop by two well-dressed men, who requested them to sign one of those very lengthy papers. "And why should we do so?" asked

the two young men. "Would you wish," said the petition-dealers, "to be yourselves Slaves? If not, sign it immediately!" Such is the system pursued!

In passing through the interior of England, I have been asked by a coachman, who at the same time avowed that, a week before, he had signed a petition against Slavery in the Colonies, "Are your Slaves in the West Indies treated like these men of ours, who are here breaking stones upon the roads, in this cold weather, at eight-pence a day?—or like that man yonder, who, with a plough, but without a horse, has gone through that whole field, and has probably a wife and children at home, dependent upon his labour?" I answered, "No!"

Shortly afterward, we met a Black man walking upon the road, cold, and destitute: "I dare say," said Coachee, "that chap, there, has a great deal to relate about the cruelties inflicted upon him in the West Indies."—"Why not give him employment," I replied, "in one of your families?"—"Oh no," answered the Petitioner for Emancipation, "he will be admitted into none of ours!"

What provision, in the case of freedom, do you contemplate for the diseased—so numerous a class among Africans? Cachectics—lepers—yaws people—invalids among young people—infirmities from old age (an immense proportion)—young and helpless;—are all these to go into the woods

to starve? Will they not die within the twelve-month? Can they all hunt wild hogs (now made scarce by the Maroons), and dig the wild curanjoe yam, which only bears at a certain period of the year?

The West Indians have two great duties to perform towards themselves:—First, to combat, and, if possible, remove, by a fair, open, broad-day exposure, the hostile feeling which has been ingrafted, and taken deep and foul root against them;—and, secondly, if the unnatural prejudice is capable of removal, to endeavour to point out a remedy for present distresses, in the endurance of which their Slaves participate.

I have often, for my own part, wondered, in case a set of rich Old Ladies (those of Clapham, for instance) were to unite their fortunes for the purpose of rendering the Africans at the present day equal in refinement to the Europeans, what plan they would start upon, supposing no present system to be in existence! To accomplish such an object upon the shores of Africa itself (as in Sierra Leone, for example,) would be impossible; because all there would be outlay, without any return, and sufficient, therefore, to ruin the undertaking. Now, let us imagine a parcel of sunny islands, with a climate congenial to those Africans, and filled with plenty. Say, that a body of intrepid adventurers went out, and that they established a Code of laws and rules, which,



while they answered all the purposes of civilization, grounded upon its only true basis, *useful industry*, should enable those good, dear Old Ladies not to take one farthing out of their own pockets, but that the islands should on the contrary afford, in some shape or other, nearly one-third of the resources of the mightiest empire in the world—such as the British,—would this, think you, not constitute the blessing of such an undertaking?

Is not rude iron the handmaid to the arts and sciences? and why not industry, in an equal degree, to all the virtues? Is it because a Slave is obliged to work at all, that he is necessarily to be presumed to be ill treated?

I am ready to prove that Slavery, as it exists in the British Colonies, is a blessing to the Slave, and not a curse to him. I shall do so by the help of comparisons.

Imagine, I beseech you, a Negro, the head of his family, making his usual domestic arrangements at home the evening preceding a market-day. A son probably he will direct to start at day-light, with a donkey, to the provision-grounds, to return, in the evening, with a load of provisions. He will himself kill a fatted hog, and desire a daughter to take it to market, bringing home, in return, salted pork, beef, butter,—nay, even brandy, Madeira wine, malt liquors, &c. occasionally,—for the entertainment of his family and friends. Another son or daughter he may appoint

to pluck the fruit, and carry it to market; while his wife, and younger child or children, remain at home, to attend the pigs, a numerous stock of poultry, and other domestic affairs. The plantain, the cocoa, and other vegetables, while they furnish food for the Negroes themselves, supply also an abundance for their small stock,—the suckers and peeling of the plantain, and heads of the cocoa, especially;—besides which, there is a wild vine, called Hog-meat, growing abundantly in all situations.

The whole of the family are annually clothed by the Owner, and quite sufficiently so for every want in that climate. They are allowed weekly (even the youngest child) a supply of Scotch herrings or Newfoundland fish, and in all cases of drought or other causes to lessen their supply of provisions (particularly among the aged), they are assisted from the stores of the estate. The man himself (supposing him to be one of the confidential people) gets weekly one or two quarts of rum; and each young child, a quart of sugar, and two or three quarts (according to the ability of the property) of either rice, corn-meal, or wheat-flower;—while, in case of sickness, the utmost attention is shown to them, and wine or any thing else provided, which the medical man who attends may order. No taxes, no poor-rates, no tithes, and even no rents, has this family to pay;—a house is provided by the master for each individual who may ask for it, with the choice of the best provision-land upon the

estate, unlimited as to quantity, for grounds. If this family have any aged relatives, they are all equally supplied with a separate home, weekly allowances, clothing, medical care &c., although not one iota of work is done for the master.

I ask you, next, to look at this family on its way to church on Sundays; all of them gaily dressed, and the father and mother probably wearing silk stockings. In towns Negro balls are frequent, and their dresses very extravagant.

After this, I may, perhaps, ask you to glance your eye at the teeth of the man, and it is possible you will find them to have been originally filed for eating human flesh; he having come from some part of Africa, of which the natives are cannibals!

Compare, then, this Negro, in his own country a cannibal, with what he now is, surrounded by a family, aided by the arts of civil life, and taught the truths of religion; and we fearlessly ask the whole world—is, or is not, his present situation his blessing?

We in the West Indies are not—indeed we are not—less willing to make the Slaves happy, than you in England!

The writer of these pages possesses, as he has already said, five hundred Negroes; and he asks you to point out any one thing, capable of benefiting the Slave, without interfering with the rights of property, and he will undertake to adopt it—

to practise it—as effectually as would be possible under any legislative obligation. But he asks, and (as he submits) with sound reason, that you will allow the labour of the Slave to be applied to the purpose of his own improvement, and not exhaust it in your taxations.

Were instances of industry and good conduct, such as I have mentioned, general, it might benefit the Slaves themselves to declare the whole population free; but, unfortunately, the general mass of them are the very reverse. An industrious Negro, situated as I have described, might have it in his power to provide for the aged and the children of his family, but the greater number would not work; and even the single individual, without wife or child to provide for, (although the same inducements are held out to him,) would steal and starve, rather than apply himself to labour. Creating “fictitious wants,” which is one of your favourite theories, would consign your whole system to destruction, ere your one or two unfortunate countrymen, whom you doomed to the experiment, could accomplish any thing like your purpose. We prefer acting upon the safe side, and feeding, clothing, and maintaining those who, we find, cannot take care of themselves.

Free labour, if it could be obtained for hire, would leave the individual who performed it, to support his own children and connexions, and the aged of his family, or to let them starve. An aged



person and a child can do little to help the father of a family in the labours of agriculture ; and you ought to recollect, that you have yourselves denied all rights of manufacture to your dependents.

The West-India proprietor might benefit, could he hire an able man for a certain sum, and leave all the care of that man's family to himself. But how are you to insure this ? If you make a Negro free, do you compel him any longer to work (even at a specified hire) for that particular individual, who had originally invested a large sum in his purchase ? Do you not leave it open to the Negro to hire himself preferably to any stranger ?—and will not this destroy every vested right of the original possessor ?

Say, that, for the sake of an experiment, you could convert Slavery into a sort of common fund, in which the persons who hold Slaves shall be entitled to a corresponding share or value ; and that we become content to leave the management of the whole affair to yourselves ;—what security have we, that the means you adopt, may not destroy your own undertaking ?

At present, you lay a tax upon our staples, of enormous amount ; and then calmly attempt to reason us into the belief, that it cannot injure us, as being eventually paid, not by ourselves, but by the consumer. This is the Philosopher's Stone, to a certainty !—Double—nay, treble it,—the

same principle will hold good ! Do the same with every article consumed in your dominions, and your National Debt will soon be paid !

Why should corn have a scale of duties, tempering it to the necessities of the people, when it may so readily be put at a double price, and rendered a *luxury*, rather than a *necessary* of life, with such infinite advantage to the country ?

Unfortunately, the Colonies have no real representatives ; and the British Parliament forgets, that, if it undertake the whole task of legislating, it ought, at least, to do them justice !

To the American Colonies of old, you denied every right of manufacture, and you have done the same to the West Indies ; not permitting us even to refine our own sugars for exportation. We have a growing population of free Browns and Blacks, who are indisposed to cultivate the earth, and for whom we ought to find trades and manufactures. We know, however, that these people are indolent, and that they will never be able to cope with the industry of those in England ; and we know, too, that the principal use of a Colony to the Mother Country, is that of supplying raw materials for home manufacture. Unlike the article of tea, which admits of no improvement beyond a first preparation, see what can be made of a pound of cotton ! And there are a number of things with which sugar can be combined, to render them valuable. The East Indians, who are an organized body in England, tell us, that if the con-

sumption of tea were increased, it would help off our sugars ! This is the continued application of the same cruel principle against us ! Distressed as we are, “ you shall not be relieved, even in the least degree,” say they, “ unless it be by serving ourselves twofold !” Will any medical man declare that there is nutriment in tea ? At the first taste, it is unpleasant ; and its use has nothing but *habit* for a recommendation. Give a Negro, in Jamaica, a cup of tea, and he will spit it from his mouth as a species of poison. Give him a cup of good coffee, and he will tell you (like the farmer in England, with his ale,) that it is “ meat and drink to him,” and that he can work upon it. The English people know not how to make good coffee, and thence its comparative disuse among them. They grind an immense quantity at once, nay, even with a steam-engine, instead of roasting the small quantity required at the moment, and grinding and using it hot, while the flavour continues in it.

We intreat, nay, we demand, that you shall protect us at home, and with foreign States, in the sale of our own *raw* material.

Will any reasonable man believe, that Great Britain, with all her commercial greatness, and national power, cannot, if she will, protect her Colonies in the markets of Europe ?

Why should Brazil, and why should Spain from the Havannah, supply, almost exclusively, the large markets of Russia and Austria ?

You tell us, that we have it in our power

to export direct, in the ships of those countries. But no such ships have as yet reached us; and we are led to believe, that if any such trade were commenced, it would so far prejudice the interests of England (if only in the freights), that your Parliament would immediately put it down. We even believe, that if there had not been difficulties, such as to render the trade impracticable, you would never have granted the permission! There is, for example, in your Act of Parliament, a proviso, that the foreign Power with which your Colonies shall be permitted to trade direct, shall itself place British shipping upon the footing of those of the most favoured nations in its ports;—a matter over which we have no control;—not to mention, that the Foreign Powers concerned have some reason on their side for taxing our produce, in retaliation for commercial restrictions or impositions on your part, with which we have no earthly connexion! Besides which, do you think that there are a dozen proprietors in Jamaica, who can ship any where but to their mortgagees in England? Have you not already rendered us a community of bankrupts, and gone over even the second stage, of destroying the merchants at home, who made us their advances? Can even five hundred pounds be any where borrowed, at the present moment, to supply a sugar estate in Jamaica with clothing for its Negroes?

“There,” says Justice, “take ye each a shell!”



Are not the mortgagees become the mere tax-gatherers of your Government over our produce? Led on to advance, under the fallacious hope of an increase of prices, they sink their whole capital; while, upon paper, it continues to appear, that they are charging a commission for their labours. Your Government—or your treasury—alone derives all the advantages;—our share in the transaction is distress and beggary! Our estates, in point of fact, are estates already assumed by the Crown; and we are mere agents, who, under other circumstances, would not so much as accept the management of them upon similar terms!

The tax, you say, is paid by the consumer,—yet you make it a personal burden upon ourselves, by compelling us to pay it before it enters the market; and if, by defalcation of our purchaser, (no unusual thing in these days) we lose the whole of our trifling net proceeds, you compel us to lose also the whole treble amount of your duty! Is this just?

Your Commercial Capitalists are arrayed against our sugar, wishing to secure every advantage exclusively to your refineries. Your Landed Proprietors are arrayed against our rum; so that spirits from their barley pay no more than a third of what is exacted from spirits from our sugar.

Your Houses of Parliament consist or are elected from both those bodies; and your Mi-

nisters are the echoes of your Parliament. You undertake to legislate for the Colonies. To whom, now, are the Colonies to look for protection?

Foreign States that have Colonies have no need of our produce; and those that have no Colonies, will not receive our sugars in a refined state, because they wish to encourage their own manufactures. Is not this reasonable on their part? But, if so, why continue to sacrifice us, through the medium of a false system of policy? Why not encourage the exportation of our superabundant *raw* material, content with your own advantage in its freights, &c., from the West Indies, rather than deny us any means of relief, except through your refiners, which, as you must see, it is not the interest of those States to permit? Think you that any bounty upon refined sugar would not be met by a corresponding prohibitory duty on the part of Foreign States? The scale which, at the present moment, they have adopted, is excessive; and if, even under a bounty, they chose to avail themselves of the advantage offered by the expenditure of your money, the greater the exportation, the greater the loss to the British treasury!

Well may the people of England believe that a bounty upon refined sugars would be but money out of their pockets. To us, even the drawback, (extended equally on all sugars) has hitherto operated as an injury, by encouraging the competition

of Foreign Colonies, who can cultivate sugar with so much greater advantage than ourselves.

We ought to have the monopoly of the British market, both in scale sugars, and in those for refining. Humanity dictates this. Our peasantry in a large proportion are old and infirm, with another large proportion of young children; and they can but look for their necessities and comforts from you, through us who are their nominal masters. Other Slave Colonies are differently circumstanced. They have later, and even now continual importations of Africans—all prime, able people—to cultivate their estates. Even the Mauritius had its Slave-trade till a late period, while ours was abolished in 1808. No Foreign Slave Colony enjoys the ameliorating laws in behalf of the Slaves, like those enjoyed in yours.

Go to the fountain-head, if you are to relieve us,—and secondary objects will, of themselves, find their own level. A considerable reduction of duty will increase the home consumption, to the advantage of the poor at home—to the advantage of the Slaves, as well as of the masters, in the West Indies—to the advantage of the British manufacturer, ship-owner, and navigator, (whose profits, from increased demand from all these sources, would be raised)—and to the British revenue, not alone directly from the larger amount of sugar consumed, but indirectly also, from all the stimulated sources first referred to;

namely, commerce, manufactures, and navigation.

A word with Mr. Buxton, at parting.—“ Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee !”

Where next will Mr Buxton find a test, whereupon to build his proud superstructure of sophistry ? He tells you, that he is too generous to allude to any particular cases of cruelty, though terrible accounts (but mark you that he describes none of them!) have been received in England. “ That there are instances of reprehensible cruelty *he doubts not* ; but no West Indian shall say that he rests his case upon them.”—That “ he cannot conceal that there are great difficulties in the way of arriving at the real truth in regard to the condition of the Negroes.” He declares that, so “ far from wishing to cast any reproach upon the West Indians, as being persons destitute of the ordinary feelings of humanity, he knows that many of them are gentlemen of as much honour and intelligence, and in their natures as generous and humane, as any in the House of Commons.”

His case, nevertheless, he tells you, is this ;—“ that the whole Slave population is in misery ;—that the Negroes are physically and morally wretched ;—and that, *in our Colonies* (mark you, without producing any ground for comparison) they are in the last degree of moral abasement and physical wretchedness.”

To prove all this, he insists that “ the House



*must admit*, that it is desirable to arrive at some *full, fair, and unequivocal TEST*, by which the real condition of the Negroes can be resolved. That TEST, he continues, is,—“and I” (the writer is quoting Mr. Buxton’s words, as reported in the debate in the House of Commons on the 15th of April, 1831,) “I call,” said Mr. Buxton, “the attention of the House to the point, *the rate at which the population in the West Indies, in a state of Slavery, has increased or diminished.*”

He is perfectly ready, he tells you, to admit, that if he do not prove a great decrease in that population to have taken place, he shall prove nothing;—thus, by a sophistical mode of argument, requiring you, upon your part, to acknowledge, that, in showing a decrease, he proves the condition of the Negroes in *the British Colonies* to be in the last degree of moral abasement and physical wretchedness.

He does not deny that, with respect to the Island of Hayti (St. Domingo) it may be said, “that there is the greatest degree of demoralization at this moment prevailing in that country”—that country of free Negroes;—“that there is no commerce, no industry, and no civilization.”

“The *whip*, however,” he tells you, “is not the cause of mortality—it is *extreme toil.*” After this, he adds, that “it is said that the Negro Slaves do more work than freemen who receive wages;” and then again asserts,—“But *this is not the fact.*” That is, the Negro Slaves do not do more work

than freemen; and yet it is "extreme toil" that kills the Negro Slaves, while the same or a greater share of this extreme toil does not kill the freemen. This is Mr. Buxton! The lesser or the equal work kills the Slaves, and the greater or the equal work preserves the freemen's lives;—and yet the lives are wholly dependent upon the amount of work!

But no! It is the *cane*—the unfortunate *cane*—upon which the interested East-India gentleman builds all his theory. "The law of increase," he tells you, "sinks, in the Colonies, before the cultivation of sugar.—The Negroes enter the sugar-grounds, and then the work of death begins."

To sugar, Mr. *Brewer* Buxton has a mortal aversion. That Hayti, (Saint Domingo,) which suffers under the greatest degree of demoralization—without commerce, industry, or civilization—*produces no sugar*, is no proposition—no *test* for his arguments.

Do away with sugar, says Mr. Buxton; I hate it; and let the West Indians cultivate what else they will! Alas! bigoted and selfish sir,—our works are all built—our fields cultivated; but we will meet you even here. Join us in sharing the sacrifice of buildings and present cultivation; and then point out to us the article upon which you will allow the industry of a Colony to be employed, not taxing it beyond its bearing. Name the article; and if, in the taxes which you do

impose (now likely to be lost to you for ever,) you will allow them to accumulate, and form a fund for reimbursing the owners, and thus letting us manumize our Slaves without ruin to ourselves, (rather than apply those taxes to your own general purposes,) we will agree with you, also, upon that ground! We are aware that you have lately made to the Colony of Jamaica an undefined offer, to some such effect.

You tell us, in plain terms, what we are not to do; tell us, in equally plain terms, what we may do, and we will try to be satisfied.

The East Indians have an exclusive right by monopoly in the produce of their peculiar possessions, for which they pay no original purchase-money; and it is rather too much, that we, the West Indians, should be put upon a footing with strangers, in any general measure which you may contemplate,—nay, that we should, in that respect, be compelled to suffer our property to be further deteriorated by your missionaries. Why do they not go to Hayti, near by us, where there is treble the population, in the “greatest demoralization?”

But, to return to Mr. Buxton’s arguments, which are advanced with no one shadow of real truth, but which he fearlessly turns round and challenges any friend of the West Indians (the unfortunate victims of his sophistry, four thousand miles away!) to meet him and disprove:—

His favourite theory of multiplying by heaven's command, carries him a little beyond what he would establish; and thence his admirers obtain a very exact calculation of the manner in which the whole world may shortly be overrun with Blacks. He tells us, that, in the year 1804, when the French abandoned Hayti, the Negro population amounted to 423,000 souls; and that, in twenty years afterwards, in consequence of its freedom, it had *increased* (implying that the births had so largely exceeded the deaths) to the number of 935,000; or that, in other words, it had been more than doubled. And this, though, at the same time, he does not deny that "there is the greatest degree of demoralization prevailing in that country," that there is "no commerce, no industry, and no civilization."

The writer was, some years since, in St. Domingo, and can well confirm the latter part of Mr. Buxton's statement! He could not walk through a street, without first having his hat tied to the button-hole of a jacket which he then wore in His Majesty's service; certain, otherwise, of having it stolen from his head! But where or how Mr. Buxton procured his Census, he leaves his admirers, transfixed by his eloquence, at a loss to guess!

All who live in the vicinity of that island, believe that the natural decrease of its population, or destruction of the lives of its inhabitants, has been extreme, even to horror! Its murderous interna



wars of extermination are testified by the human bones whitening upon wilds which once were cultivated fields; and its shores, more favoured in the rites of burial,

(The ocean's wide mantle shall o'er thee be spread,  
The white bones of mariners pillow thy head !)

but not less subject to the refinements of torture in drowning, are all fully equal to whatever the silken imaginations of the Old Ladies of Clapham can contemplate !

*We* hear nothing of the immense natural increase of the Blacks in St. Domingo ; but *we* do happen to know this fact,—that Boyer (their president) robbed Spain of the remaining half of the island, (from its proximity to the other half, not worth, perhaps, retaining,) and thus doubled his own dominion of free subjects, as well as (most likely) Mr. Buxton's theory.

*We* know, also, that there are parts of the United States of North America which have made every exertion to rid themselves of their own free Black population, by sending them to Saint Domingo ; but which Black emigrants generally wish to leave again the island of Black freedom. *We* know, further, that the cut-throats and convicts of the whole British West Indies usually find their way into the Haytian *kingdom* ; and *we* shall be thankful to learn from Mr. Buxton, whether he includes in his Census the number of runaway

British Slaves, never afterward heard of, but whom *we* suppose to go over, in fishing-canoes, from Jamaica to Saint Domingo ;—or, to be more particular, whether that Census includes six Negroes who absconded from Jamaica with Mr. M'Kewan's pilot-boat, and went there. Mr. Buxton may also be able to furnish us with a denial (I am not advancing mere general theories, and calling upon Mr. Buxton to refute them)—that Henry the First, of Hayti, (vulgarly called His Imperial Majesty Christophe,) was himself a convict, transported from the island of Jamaica ;—as well as that his late Majesty's brother, a very different character, and one whom the writer takes this opportunity of saying that he very much respects, is at the present moment a fiddler, in Kingston, Jamaica, named England ; preferring, as I have heard him say, that occupation to a dukedom at Cape François.

But, next for Mr. Buxton's other *fact*, in the comparison which he draws between Barbadoes and Trinidad. The writer, though he professes thoroughly to understand every care and want among the Negro population of Jamaica, (and while he presumes to include himself among the favoured planters whom Mr. Buxton eulogises) has never, unfortunately, enjoyed a personal opportunity of observing the domestic management of the Negroes either at Barbadoes or Trinidad. In that respect therefore he is upon a footing with Mr. Buxton ; nor would he allow himself to hope that he could be more than a very

insufficient advocate for the one island or the other. Necessity, and not, as with Mr. Buxton, a matter of choice, brings the author of these pages before the public. He presents himself as the defender of his own property, in the island of Jamaica; property, in the acquisition of which he has worked hard and unremittingly during twenty years; professing, through that whole period, and to the present hour, to entertain more real and practical humanity, and even friendship, for the Slaves, than ever yet were the inmates (as he ventures to believe) of the *merciful* heart of Mr. Buxton!

He tells us, that in Barbadoes, “little sugar, comparatively speaking, is grown;”—that the population is “three times that of Trinidad, and yet grows one quarter less than the quantity of sugar grown by the former.” “In Trinidad,” he tells us, (upon his own authority, though he has never seen either island,) “one man does as much as five in Barbadoes;”—and, then, he exultingly asks some honourable friend to come forward, and say, “what it is that produces this decrease of population, where an increase ought to take place?” —“It is,” says he, “for Honourable Gentlemen on the other side of the question, to explain this *fact*.” Reasoning with a vengeance! This is the language of the Saints! The seal is broken, and the vial of our wrath must be poured out against you, O ye West Indians! If our reasons are insufficient, do you furnish us with others, so

that we may but justify ourselves in the eyes of the people.

If, in the House of Commons, as unfortunately happens, there is no "Honourable Gentleman" prepared to follow Mr. Buxton through his mazes of sophistry, and to answer, at the moment, charges insidiously blended together in speeches of a whole twelvemonth's concoction, then the conclusion is inevitable, and Mr. Buxton—his premises uncontroverted—modestly assures you, that he admits he shall prove nothing, if he do not arrive at a tangible conclusion!

For any Honourable Gentleman, in the House of Commons, to get up and declare, that there is not among their body a single individual (Mr. Buxton inclusive) acquainted with the internal condition of both Barbadoes and Trinidad, would be quite out of the question! Manliness is one thing; the humiliation of exposing a want of knowledge entirely another!

Yet it seems strange that, prepared for the subject as these Protectors of the West Indies must have been, there was no inventive faculty to be found among them, capable of suggesting a theoretical answer, at least equally entitled to attention with the theoretical question of Mr. Buxton! Might it not, for instance, have been said, that Barbadoes, an old, worn-out British Colony, trodden to the earth with duties, had no longer a soil adapted to the cultivation of the cane? That a principle in nature, over which neither Barba-



does nor Trinidad could possess control, but of the operation of which the neighbouring dry and barren sands of the Bahamas, or Salt Islands, is a sufficient example, renders the atmosphere of the one island less pernicious to vegetable, and the other less pernicious to animal life? Is it for us to uncharge the air of its excess of hydrogen (so peculiarly the food of plants) in a climate where the rays of the sun convert into miasma every drop of stagnant water? If so, why does not England employ a corresponding power at Sierra Leone?

The Barbadians might have told you that their Slave-trade ceased in 1808; and that, therefore, for the reasons heretofore assigned in respect of Jamaica, though, in figures, they may appear to have three times the amount of the Slaves of Trinidad, yet they have no corresponding amount of effective labouring Slaves;—that the last imported Negroes of Barbadoes, in 1808, were of the average age of thirty years, and are now fifty-four, and past labour; and that the island has also a great number of former old ones from importations, and young children, who require nurses:—a very different state of things from that of any Colony which has lately received able people (principally males) by importation, and in which, therefore, the principal part of the Slaves are effective; while, in an old Colony, not thirty in a hundred perform the duties of the estate. If Mr. Buxton admits, that the older the Colony, the less the decrease, does not the fact itself warrant a pre-

sumption, that when the rising generation of Negroes shall come fairly forward, and the old African stock by the course of nature shall have died, there will be no longer those results which he now depends upon for his TEST? The reader must bear in mind, that children were not among the Slaves formerly imported into the Colonies from Africa, by the merchants of Liverpool and Bristol.

There are other arguments used by Mr. Buxton :—for example, “ Just change,” says he, “ the circumstance. Let every thing remain precisely as at present, but let the labour be performed by Slaves, instead of freemen ; and the dreadful result which has occurred in our own Colonies, would follow in all other places.”

Pretty fools you are, to believe a proposition which never has, and never can, be brought into practice, merely because it is urged by Mr. Buxton! When, in the name of Heaven, did he ever see the experiment tried ?

No, no !—Slavery, like a stream, runs downward to freedom, in your Colonies. It never returns. Many go down, but none come up.

Let him produce a single instance among us ;—or, are those the cases to which he says he will not allude, although such “ terrible accounts” had been received in England, even “ within that day or two ?”

His argument of the Maroons—stated *our way* (and be it remembered that Mr. Buxton, a coward to the climate, will not venture out, to see what he

is talking about!) admits of a very different construction. That any Maroon has been made a Slave, is an assertion, which, from all the information I possess, I fearlessly deny. But that, on the opposite hand, Slaves are converted into Maroons, let Mr. Buxton endeavour to disprove! Let him, at the same time, disprove that the Maroons have purchased Slaves, whom they still hold as Slaves, and have thus added to their numbers.

Oh this increase!—so purely regardless of all moral improvement. Is the condition of the Jamaica Maroons superior to that of the Slaves? Let Mr. Buxton prove it.

Mr. Buxton tells us, that, “of the children of the Slaves, very near the right proportion are born. Up to ten years of age, the proper proportion of them live. They then enter the Sugar-grounds, and then the work of death begins. The whole weight of the system falls upon the field Slaves alone. There is my argument,” (says Mr. Buxton); “I fairly put it to the Honourable Gentleman, as intelligibly as I can; and I leave him to answer it.”

Now, Mr. Buxton, suppose *I* answer it, if the “Honourable Gentleman” will not; (and I dare to say that not one among all the “Honourable Gentlemen” can tell you so much as at what hour of the day “shell blows” upon an estate!) Will you receive—nay, do you desire an answer?—or, is it only your object to enable yourself to fly off

at a tangent into some other labyrinth of your sophistry?

In the first instance, just admit with me that you have yourself established *my fact* (not *my theory*,) that Slaves would not decrease, but for the deaths of the *old ones*; that is, the whole remaining African stock, now, as to the youngest, fifty-four years of age, and past child-bearing.

I will now answer you, as intelligibly as I can, in what the field labour of producing sugar, which you so much condemn, really consists. If, as you say, that labour is five times as much as the Slave labour performed in Barbadoes, I will, at least, engage to prove, that it is not one-third of the free labour performed in England!

Every one will understand me when I speak of the furrows made with a plough. With us, those furrows are usually from four to four and a half feet apart. A field of canes (a "piece," as we term it,) contains from eight to fifteen acres; and the furrows, if judiciously ploughed, will all of them run, as nearly as possible, the whole length of the field, so as to have the work equal for every Negro.

The "Great Gang" \* is the effective strength of an estate. A young Negro is *never forced* into that class of the labourers; yet *young females* are anxious to join the Great Gang, in many instances, at twelve years of age, and are often kept

\* Upon an estate having three hundred Negroes, about fifty may be considered the average number who work, upon the hoe, in the Great Gang.



against their wills from that arrangement. Does it not follow, that if a girl, of twelve years of age, is herself anxious to join this division of the labourers, in which she cannot omit to perform the very same labour with the rest,—that is, with the ablest Negro upon the estate, whether man or woman,—that the labour cannot be very severe?

How is it possible that even the ablest man or woman can perform a harder day's labour than even such a child, when the furrows, which I have described, are chosen indifferently among the gang, and none have more to do than follow their separate *rows*, as they are termed, in *cleaning*, trashing, or cutting the line of canes, which lies immediately before them? No one Negro can go beyond the rest with his work, for they would not allow it; and often have I (when a Book-keeper—a term in Jamaica which none of you understand,) taken a hoe, and out-stripped all the Negroes together. The instrument with which they work, is the grubbing-hoe. Procure one, (as you easily may,) and after comparing it with a spade, judge for yourselves whether the Negroes would be likely to consent to exchange it!

The only really hard work on an estate, consists in the digging of cane-holes; a labour in which, in most cases, about a month of the year is employed by the estate's Negroes; and concerning which the Negroes, (as from what follows, will be easily

\* When digging cane-holes, extra allowances are given of pickled herrings, sugar, and rum.

believed) are never known to complain. If, as often happens, task-work is allowed, a Negro will finish his daily share of the work by two o'clock, and have the whole remaining hours to himself. I will relate an anecdote of this description of labour, in which I was myself a party; and I must be excused if I do not follow Mr. Buxton's example, by hiding names. When a Book-keeper upon Tulloch Estate, in the Parish of St. Thomas in the Vale, I saw four Negroes (it is usual to assist a weakly Negro with a strong one) dig in pairs against each other; when one hundred holes, upon pretty stiff land, (a very able day's work,) was completed by ten o'clock in the forenoon. The Negro who won the bet (which by the bye, I had myself to pay—and that doubly—for those who lost insisted that they had no right to exert themselves for nothing,) belonged to Mrs. Caldwell, of Mount Pleasant, and was by name Thomas. I ought to add, in order to show that the work could not have begun before daylight, that the estate's Negroes stocked up the land previously, that very morning. Here, then, we have *the very killing* whole day's work in the hardest labour upon an estate, performed before ten o'clock in the forenoon; and in short, in less than five hours! Yet Mr. Buxton tells you, with the utmost solemnity, that the Negroes are compelled to work eighteen hours in the day, and *that*, as he would lead you to believe, throughout the year.

The truth is, that during crop—a period of

peculiar plenty and cheerfulness, as I have before shown—a small proportion of the Negroes are required to “keep spell” alternately, at night, in attending to the boiling of the sugar; but not to perform any manner of field-work, or of carriage of the canes from the field. Even this, if possible, we should willingly dispense with; but, in any other manner, hitherto, we have found it impossible to “get off a crop,” or execute the work incumbent upon us; for, it will never do to allow the coppers to cool. And, after all, how is this worse than keeping watch on board of ship, or keeping guard in the army?

This extra-work, too, is only for a limited time—four months out of the twelve—and imposed only upon the most able people. At all other periods, and under different circumstances, no Negro can be required, upon working days, to labour *before* five o’clock in the morning, nor *after* seven in the evening; and, of that interval, two hours are allowed for dinner, and half an hour for breakfast—as is provided for by the twenty-second clause of the Jamaica Consolidated Slave Law. But, in real practice, Negroes do not turn out to work at so early an hour as five, (particularly during that period of the year when the days are shortest,) and they draw off at an earlier hour than seven, being, then, under the sole direction of the Driver; they take also double the half-hour for their breakfast, and more than two hours for their dinner.

Let me also be pardoned, if I endeavour to do

justice to an argument which was used by Mr. Sykes in the House of Commons, 1st March, 1826. Alluding to a by-law of populous towns in Jamaica, made for the express purpose of protecting young Negro children, when sauntering about,—and by which law, I believe, a small fine is imposed upon any gentleman's servant who may *ride or drive furiously* through the streets,—Mr. Sykes exultingly asked, “whether the condition of the Slaves could be said to be in a course of amelioration, when a Slave could be declared punishable for riding or driving *at a gentle pace*?”

Dr. Lushington too, I must have one word with. To inflame your passions, he spoke in the House of Commons, last year, as follows :

“ Sir, the Honourable Member opposite, the late Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, has threatened the country with the loss of Jamaica : his observations have this import ; but his main threat appears to be founded on a union of the Whites with the free People of Colour and the consequent dissolution of our dominion over the island itself. But in order to set the Honourable member's mind at rest on this point, I beg to inform him, that the free people of colour, who possess at least seventy thousand Slaves in the island of Jamaica, have authorised me to state, that they are ready to consent to a measure for the emancipation of their Slaves, if his Majesty's Government should think such a step expedient. So much for the dangers which are to be appre-



hended from a union of the Whites and free People of Colour against his Majesty's Government, in the event of the Negroes being declared entitled to their liberty! What does the Government care for the thirty-eight legislators of Jamaica? I will venture to say, that if they dare to breathe one word of sedition against our King, his Majesty will be unanimously supported by the free people of colour.

"Sir, the Colonies are safe. One half the militia are emancipated people of colour. Moreover, I tell the Honourable Gentleman opposite, that *the two thousand troops in Jamaica are under the control of the King*, and not of the far-famed Legislative Assembly. Let them remember this, and tremble for the consequences of their threatened audacity."

To add one word to this bold, this energetic appeal—so well understood by the Negroes, to whom it was virtually addressed—would be to weaken its effect. My pen would but lessen its import, were I to endeavour to point to those consequences to which it must of necessity lead.

Yet, is it nothing, let me ask, that the whole of the free People of Colour (who know that there is no oppression) have simultaneously met in the different parishes of Jamaica, and declared, by unanimous resolutions, that Dr. Lushington's assertions are false? And, is it nothing, that the very chairman of the Jamaica delegates (Mr. William Fowle Holt), himself a person of colour,

is coming to England to complain of your oppressions!

“Do unto others as you would be done unto:”—what would be thought of the West Indian who might declare (not from the stories he has read, but from what he has actually seen) that he considered all your rant and cant about “West-India Slavery” (mere words) intended only as dust, thrown into the eyes of your peasantry, to keep them from seeing the real distresses of their own situations. And what if he expressed his Religious belief—nay, uttered it as the Judgement of Heaven, committed to him equally with yourselves—that your abject—your debased poor (the fee-simple nevertheless of your empire) were urged by the Wrath of the Almighty to destroy the rich, in order that they might release themselves from their oppressors?

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It remains for the writer to say, that the foregoing pages were written before the arrival of any accounts of the recent rebellion in Jamaica.—Those who shall have taken the trouble, and exercised the candour, to give them a reading, will estimate the extent to which they have anticipated what has since transpired! At page 23 may be traced the first open act of rebellion upon Salt Spring Estate (the property alluded to), where the Negroes had some time previously determined to sacrifice the lives of Mr. Grignon (a most humane man) and his family. The steal-

ing of a large bundle of canes so that it might be detected, in defiance of every rule of the property, was got up by the Negroes, to give a colour to their purpose. The Negroes, it has been observed, are allowed to eat as many as they please, if they only do so singly, one being sufficient for a repast.

Fanaticism, not in Jamaica alone, but every where else, makes a desolate waste of the land upon which she treads. Industry, and every blessing of civilized life, wither at her approach!

Why not give us Moravian missionaries, instead of those worthless individuals, the scum of your streets, without an ostensible head,—firebrands, they come among us, with no means of subsistence, except that of preaching rebellion to our Slaves?

Mr. Wilberforce, it is said, begins to relax in the rigour of his sentiments: but the injury, by this time, may be past remedy; for the disproportion of numbers, between Blacks and Whites in Jamaica, is as thirty to one!

I have endeavoured, without success, to procure a copy of His Majesty's last Orders in Council. As a member of the House of Assembly of Jamaica, I thought myself entitled to this. I mention it, however, only to show, that beyond the *shoes* (of which I had heard), nothing contained in it, which might require notice, has come within my knowledge.

I will only stop, further, to notice the letter of Mr. James Macdonald, of Falmouth, in Ja-

maica, which, in connexion with the rebellion, has appeared in the London Gazette.

That gentleman must be strangely altered. I have known him a long time ; and have considered him to be any thing but a mock-philanthropist !

Does Mr. Macdonald know that he has become the accuser of his fellow Colonists, and in general terms too, which admit of being tortured into any thing in this country, which a prejudiced public can desire ? In his letter to the Governor, dated Falmouth, January 4, 1832, he says, “ I am happy to inform you, that *every estate under my charge* have continued faithfully at their work and completely protected their master’s property, which is very gratifying to me. *I do not wish to make any insidious remarks*, but if *other gentlemen* had acted with the same *kindness* and taken the same pains to explain the real nature of things *as I have done*, I do not think this unfortunate insurrection would have been so general ; *as in St. James’s in particular, their vengeance seems to be pointed against certain individuals.*”

Contrast this with Sir Willoughby Cotton’s declaration to the Governor, in his dispatch, dated January the 5th, viz. :—

“ The fact is, the Negroes in this district have behaved infamously, nor is there the slightest palliation for their conduct : *I have most minutely inquired into the treatment generally and particularly, and can aver it has been most kind.*”



But Sir Willoughby Cotton himself subjoins to the foregoing, the remark which follows:—"That the Overseers, or Attorneys, or Magistrates, should not have acquainted the Executive Government the extent to which the determination of the Negroes had gone all round this district 'not to work after New Year's day, without being made free,' is most astonishing, as it would appear to have been known on almost all the estates that these were the sentiments of the Negroes."

As for Lord Belmore's not knowing that a rebellion was expected—every man in England was forewarned of it! What! light a fire, and not expect it to blaze?

Lord Belmore, upon my presenting to him, as Member of Assembly for that very Parish, a petition from the inhabitants, requesting him to call the House of Assembly together at an earlier period, to guard against impending danger, told me personally of cases of which he had heard—particularly one at a Mr. Farquharson's in St. Elizabeth.—But what could Lord Belmore have done? Sent the whole disposable force to Trelawny, when the rebellion might equally have commenced at the opposite extremity of the Island—Portland, for instance, (at which it did at the same time break out,) Saint Elizabeth, or elsewhere? Are you not told, that three times the force, if divided, would not have quelled it, even in a single parish?

We learn that Mr. Samuel Moulton Barrett, a Member of the House of Commons, and “a Saint,” boasted that he could trust to his Negroes, and place himself under their protection—he did so, and his estate was one of the first destroyed.

Declare at once, people of England, whether or not it is your fixed and deliberate design to sacrifice every right of property and personal safety in your dependent fellow-subjects in the West Indies; and no longer practise, at second-hand, the hypocrisy of those sectarian demagogues, who, having accomplished their Colonial object, will next proceed to the destruction of the entire empire itself! Consider, pray do, before you step further! Your fellow-countrymen who reside in Jamaica, for the most part, are protecting *your properties*, and have nothing of their own to lose!

Is there any one ground left to us, upon which an innocent party can meet prejudice and sophistry?

“For malice will, with joy, the lie receive;  
Report, and, what it wishes true, believe!”

We offer to *prove* that we, your brethren and descendants, are more humane in Jamaica than you yourselves are in England. But you reply that you will admit no evidence; for, that every one who really knows any thing about the Colonies, becomes tainted from the acquaintance with them!

We say, "There is Sir Willoughby Cotton—must not he be an unprejudiced witness?" You answer, "No; we prefer Mr. Macdonald, who has lived forty years among you!" Consistency!

Can the desolated sugar estates afford to renew their buildings? and, if not, what is to become of their possessors?

The object of the Negroes was not blood. There was no revenge, because (go out among them, and, with Sir Willoughby Cotton, you will acknowledge) there was no ground of complaint—"their treatment was most kind." What, then, but a Millennium of Idleness, which had been preached to them, could have led them into this rebellion? and how could the influence of that principle have been better evinced, than by burning all the manufacturing buildings of the estates, with the knowledge that their owners would never be able to erect others in their stead?

Where, in the British West Indies, is left security for property?—where, even for life itself?

ANTHONY DAVIS.

London,  
March 1st, 1832.











MAR 30

because  
through



